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FORMING A

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OF EMINENT PERSONS.

BY CHARLES KNIGHT,
EDITOR OF 'HALF-HOURS WITH THE BEST AUTHORS.'

SECOND SERIES.

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND SERIES.

Our First Series explains in its Preface the general object of the work :—"The purpose of this book is to supply brief memoirs, or characteristic traits, of many distinguished persons, in connexion with the records of their own thoughts and feelings, as preserved in Autobiographies, in Diaries, and in familiar Letters." In the present Series the same object has been steadily pursued, but with the following modifications of the original plan.

1. The former Series was "divided by numerals into 'Half-hours.'" Such division was found practically inconvenient, interfering sometimes with the natural sequence of the matter of each chapter. This plan has therefore been abandoned, and the reader is left to make pauses at his own discretion.

2. More fully to carry out the principle of developing the characters or leading thoughts of the Letter-Writers, some of the Chapters in this Series have run to greater length than most of those in the former one.

3. It was no part of the original plan to include *unpublished* Letters ; but the Editor, having been fortunate in obtaining permission to print, for the first time, some interesting Letters

of Robert Southey and of George Canning, feels assured that this innovation will be welcomed as conferring a new value upon his work.

The Editor thinks it right to state that Chapters II., IV., VIII., X., and XIII., have been contributed by a member of his family under his superintendence.

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LETTER-WRITERS,
AUTOBIOGRAPHERS, AND DIARISTS.

CHAPTER I.
THE PASTON LETTERS.

CŒLEBS OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY IN SEARCH OF A WIFE.

INTERCHAPTER A.
SIR JOHN DINELY, BARONET; A SHADOW OF A WIFE-SEEKER.

B

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LETTER-WRITERS, ETC.

CHAPTER I.

THE PASTON LETTERS.

CŒLEBS OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY IN SEARCH OF A WIFE.

"I HAVE a great affection for the Pastons. They are the only people of the old time who have allowed me to know them thoroughly. I am intimate with all their domestic concerns—their wooings, their marriages, their household economies. I see them, as I see the people of my own day, fighting a never-ending battle for shillings and pence; spending lavishly at one time, and pinching painfully at another. * * * * I see the ladies leading a somewhat unquiet and constrained life till they have become conformable in the matter of marriage; and I see the young gentlemen taking a strict inventory of the amount of ready cash that is to be paid down with a bride."

I quote this paragraph from 'Once upon a Time,' originally published in 1854. My book has been several times reprinted, the last edition having appeared in 1865. During these ten years I relied upon the trustworthiness of the collection of original letters written during the reigns of Henry VI., Edward IV., and Richard III., and edited at the end of the last century by Sir John Fenn. I felt, therefore, as if the veracity of an honoured friend had been impugned, when a gentleman of the highest mark in literature hazarded a doubt whether these remarkable letters were genuine productions of the period assigned to them. That doubt has been happily set at rest by the candid acknowledgment of the error of the scepticism.

My paper in 'Once upon a Time' is a pretty full account of the chequered fortunes of the Paston family during several generations. But it is a mere essay or review, without any documentary illustration. In 'Half-hours with the best Letter-writers,' &c., I somewhat ambiguously said, "Our earliest collection of familiar letters is that of

James Howell." My meaning was, that our earliest published collection was that of the vivacious letter-writer of the seventeenth century. I am glad, therefore, to have an opportunity of correcting what, taken literally, would be something worse than a mere inadvertence. I propose to renew my acquaintance with the Paston Letters, by giving some extracts from the originals, upon the principle pursued in the former volume of grouping some letters together which will tell a connected story.

The letters which I propose to give furnish a pretty clear account of the mode in which the mother of a marriageable young lady pursued her scheme for a desirable alliance; how the daughter, a very frank and altogether charming girl, was nothing loth to fall in with her mother's wishes; how the father of the young lady was long unwilling to comply with the demands of a somewhat mercenary suitor; but how at last a compromise was effected, and a loving Valentine became a worshipful husband.

— John Paston, known as John of Gelston, to distinguish him from his elder brother Sir John Paston, has made the natural resolve of a younger brother to improve his fortunes by a happy alliance. He has had two failures, which nothing discourage him. He had been at the battle of Barnet, had fought bravely on the losing side, was wounded, and lay hidden for some time in London, very wretched, and somewhat in danger of being punished for his political mistake; but when the "sun of York" was fairly in zenith, the Lancastrians might venture out of the shade and go about their own affairs without molestation. In these "piping times of peace" John of Gelston took advantage of these halcyon days to recommence his pursuit of some lady, young and handsome if possible, but, above all, of one who would have a good dower. He was a very kind and loving brother, and imparted his affairs with little reserve to the head of the family, Sir John Paston, who was abroad. Let me first exhibit a careful mother, Dame Brews, and Margery her charming daughter, both very willing to form a family alliance with the younger brother of the house of Paston.

"UNTO MY RIGHT WORSHIPFUL COUSIN JOHN PASTON, be this
Letter delivered, &c.

"Right worshipful Cousin,—I recommend me unto you,
&c.,—And I sent mine husband a bill of the matter that ye

know of, and he wrote another bill to me again touching the same matter, and he would that ye should go unto my mistress your mother, and assay if ye might get the whole £20 into your hands, and then he would be more glad to marry with you, and will give you an £100; and Cousin, that day that she is married, my father will give her 50 marks (£33 6s. 8d.). But and (if) we accord, I shall give you a great treasure, that is, a witty gentlewoman, and if I say it, both good and virtuous; for if I should take money for her, I would not give her for a £1000; but, Cousin, I trust you so much, that I would think her well beset on you, and (if) ye were worth much more. And, Cousin, a little after that ye were gone, came a man from my Cousin Derby, and brought me word that such a change fell, that she might not come at the day that was set, as I shall let you understand more plainly when I speak with you, &c. But, Cousin, and it would please you to come again, what day that ye will set, I dare undertake that they shall keep the same day, for I would be glad that, and (if) mine husband and ye might accord in this marriage, that it might be my fortune to make an end of this matter between my cousins and you, that each of you might love other in friendly wise, &c. And, Cousin, if this bill please not your intent, I pray you that it may be burnt, &c. No more unto you at this time, but Almighty Jesu preserve you, &c.

“By your Cousin,

“DAME ELIZABETH BREWS.”

Jan. or Feb. 1476-7.

16 E. IV.

The feast of St. Valentine was, four centuries ago, truly propitious to the aspirations of young lovers. They could not then, indeed, buy emblematic hearts and darts of the stationer in town or country to make their own honeyed words look supremely ridiculous. Margery

Brews pours out her true heart in prose and verse, inditing two letters, which, at any rate, have the simple frankness of the old times.

“UNTO MY RIGHT WELL-BELOVED VALENTINE, JOHN PASTON,
Esq., be this Bill delivered, &c.

“Right reverend and worshipful, and my right well-beloved Valentine,—I recommend me unto you full heartily, desiring to hear of your welfare, which I beseech Almighty God long for to preserve unto his pleasure and your heart's desire.

“And if it please you to hear of my welfare, I am not in good heele (health) of body nor of heart, nor shall be till I hear from you :—

“For there wottys (knows) no creature what pain that I endure,
And for to be dead (for my life), I dare it not d'ycur' (discover).

“And my lady my mother hath laboured the matter to my father full diligently, but she can no more get than ye know of, for the which, God knoweth, I am full sorry. But if that ye love me, as I trust verily that ye do, ye will not leave me therefore ; for if that ye had not half the livelihood that ye have, for to do the greatest labour that any woman alive might, I would not forsake you.

“And if ye command me to keep me true wherever I go,
I wis I will do all my might you to love and never no mo.
And if my friends say that I do amiss,
They shall not me let so for to do,

Mine heart me bids evermore to love you
Truly over all earthly thing,
And if they be never so wroth,
I trust it shall be better in time coming.

“No more to you at this time, but the Holy Trinity have you in keeping ; and I beseech you that this bill be not seen of none earthly creature save only yourself, &c.

"And this letter was indited at Topcroft, with full heavy heart, &c.,

"By your own

"MARGERY BREWS."

TOPCROFT, *February, 1476-7.*

16 E. IV.

"TO MY RIGHT WELL-BELOVED COUSIN, JOHN PASTON, Esq.,
be this Letter delivered, &c.

"Right worshipful and well-beloved Valentine, in my most humble wise I recommend me unto you, &c.,—And heartily I thank you for the letter which that ye sent me by John Beckerton, whereby I understand and know that ye be purposed to come to Topcroft in short time, and without any errand or matter, but only to have a conclusion of the matter betwixt my father and you; I would be most glad of any creature alive, so that the matter might grow to effect. And thereas (whereas) ye say, and (if) ye come and find the matter no more towards you than ye did aforetime, ye would no more put my father and my lady my mother to no cost nor business for that cause a good while after, which causeth mine heart to be full heavy; and if that ye come, and the matter take to none effect, then should I be much more sorry and full of heaviness.

"And as for myself I have done and understand in the matter that I can or may, as God knoweth; and I let you plainly understand that my father will no more money part withal in that behalf, but an £100 and 50 marks (£33 6s. 8d.), which is right far from the accomplishment of your desire.

"Wherefore, if that ye could be content with that good and my poor person, I would be the merriest maiden on ground; and if ye think not yourself so satisfied, or that ye might have much more good, as I have understood by you afore; good,

true, and loving Valentine, that ye take no such labour upon you as to come more for that matter, but let (what) is pass and never more to be spoken of, as I may be your true lover and beadwoman during my life.

"No more unto you at this time, but Almighty Jesu preserve you both body and soul, &c.

"By your Valentine,

"MARGERY BREWS."

Affairs are now ripe for the confidences of the two brothers. A letter of Sir John Paston's lets us a little into the secrets of John of Gelston's former love passages.

"To JOHN PASTON, Esq., in haste.

"I have your letter and your man Bykerton, by whom I know all the matters of Mistress Brews, which if it be as he saith, I pray God bring it to a good end.

"Item, as for this matter of Mistress Burley, I hold it but a bare thing; I feel well that it passeth not marks; I saw her for your sake; she is a little one,—she may be a woman hereafter if she be not old now,—her person seemeth 13 years of age, her years, men say, be full 18; she knoweth not of the matter, I suppose, nevertheless she desired to see me, as glad as I was to see her.

"I pray you send me some writing to Calais of your speed with Mistress Brews; Bykerton telleth me that she loveth you well; if I died I had lever (*rather*) ye had her than the Lady Wargrave (Walgrave), nevertheless she singeth well with an harp.

"Clopton is afraid of Sir T. Gray, for he is a widower now late, and men say that he is acquainted with her of old.

"No more. Written on Sunday the 9th day of March, in the 17th year of Edward IV., to Calais ward.

"If ye have Mistress Brews, and E. Paston Mistress Bylingford, ye be like to be brethren.

"JOHN PASTON, Kt."

Sunday, 9 March, 1476-7.

17 E. IV.

The missives of the two brothers appear to have crossed, as we now say. The younger describes the progress of his wooing, and then proceeds to minor matters about Caistor, which, apart from the whole story of the long family contests of the Pastons with the Duke of Norfolk about this property, are scarcely intelligible. They show, however, that the old manor-house was once more in the possession of the ancient owners; and that, however poor, they were in a better position than formerly to hold their own, however assailed by writ or gun.

"THIS BILL to be delivered to THOMAS GYNEY, goodman (*Keeper*) of the GEORGE by Paul's Warf, or to his Wife, to send to Sir JOHN PASTON, wherever he be, at Calais, London, or other place.

"Right worshipful Sir, and my most good and kind Brother, in as humble wise as I can, I recommend me to you,—Sir, it is so that I have, since John Bykerton departed from home, been at Topcroft at Sir Thomas Brews's, and as for the matter that I sent you word of by John Bykerton, touching myself and Mistress Margery Brews, I am yet at no certainty, her father is so hard; but I trow I have the good will of my lady her mother and her; but as the matter proveth, I shall send you word, with God's grace, in short time. But as for John Bykerton, I pray you deal with him for surety as a soldier should be dealt with; trust him never the more for the bill that I sent you by him, but as a man as wild, for everything that he told me is not true; for he departed without licence of his master Sir Thomas Brews, and is sore endangered (*in debt*) to divers in this country; I pray God that I write not to you

of him too late ; but for all this I know none untruth (*treachery*) in him, but yet I pray you trust him not over-much upon my word.

“Sir, Perse Moody recommendeth him to your mastership, and beseecheth you to send him word in haste how he shall be demeaned at your place at Caistor ; for he is assigned to nobody as yet, to take of meat and drink, nor yet where he shall have money to pay for his meat and drink ; and now is the chief replenishing of your warren there ; the advantage of the dove-house were well for him till ye come home yourself.

“Sir, I pray you pardon me of my writing, howsoever it be, for carpenters of my craft, that I use now, have not alderbest their wits their own : and Jesu preserve you.

“Written at Norwich, the 9th day of March, in the 17th year of Edward IV.

“JOHN PASTON.”

NORWICH, *Sunday, 9 March, 1476-7.*
17 E. IV.

The list of the fair ladies to whom John of Gelston has made advances is truly a very formidable one. Sir John Paston makes mention of two only in addition to Margery Brews, but there is a bevy of others in the background, as we learn from previous correspondence. There were Mistress Alice Boleyn and Mistress Catherine Dudley. They vanish into thin air, and then Mistress Elizabeth Eberton comes upon the stage. His fantasy inclines to this lady, “even if Eberton would not give so much to Mistress Elizabeth his daughter as I might have with the other.” The elder brother is always the recipient of these interesting disclosures. The suitor thus writes to the absent knight, requesting, “ere that ye depart out of London to speak with Harry Eberton’s wife, draper, and to inform her that I am proffered a marriage in London which is worth six hundred marks and better, with whom I prayed you to commune, inasmuch as I might not tarry in London myself ; always reserving, that if so be that Mrs. Eberton will deal with me, that you should not conclude in the other place.” Sir John is next entreated “to commune with John Lee and his wife, and to understand

how the matter at the Black Friars doth; and that ye will see and speak with the *thing* herself, and with her father and mother." The "thing" is a widow, and is no doubt a rival to the draper's daughter. "Also, that it like you to speak to your apothecary, which was sometime the Earl of Warwick's apothecary, and to weet of him what the widow of the Black Friars is worth, and what her husband's name was—he can tell all, for he is executor to the widow's husband." The Lady Walgrave, mentioned in Sir John Paston's letter, was very cool, as it appears, upon the bold adventurer, for she had returned his ring. He cares little for the rebuff, and goes his way rejoicing in another chase. "I understand that Mistress Fitzwalter hath a sister, a maid, to marry." He is piously desirous that this maid "might come into Christian men's hands." After all these changes and miscarriages the disinterested Christian fixes his eye upon a "bright particular star"—Margery Brews. The course of that true love does run smooth for a little while, as we have seen. But there are still difficulties to be overcome before John and Margery are indissolubly united, and are happy ever afterwards.

At the commencement of this prosperous wooing, John Paston has secured the services of a faithful friend, to keep a close eye upon the proceedings of the Brews family, who thus writes:—

"UNTO MY RIGHT WORSHIPFUL MASTER, JOHN PASTON, Esq.,
be this Bill delivered, &c.

"Right worshipful Sir,—I recommend me unto you, letting you know, as for the young gentlewoman, she oweth you her good heart and love; as I know by the communication that I have had with her for the same.

"And, Sir, ye know what my master and my lady hath proffered with her, 200 marks (£133 6s. 8d.), and I daresay that her chamber and arrayment (apparel) shall be worth 100 marks (£66 13s. 4d.); and I heard my lady say that and (if) the case required, both ye and she should have your board with my lady three years after.

"And I understand, by my lady, that ye should labour the matter to my master, for it should be the better.

“ And I heard my lady say,—

“ That it was a feeble oak,
That was cut down at the first stroke.

“ And ye be beholden unto my lady for her good word, for she hath never praised you too much.

“ Sir, like as I promised you, I am your man, and my good will ye shall have in word and deed, &c.

“ And Jesu have you in his merciful keeping, &c.

“ By your man,

“ THOMAS KELA.”

February 1476-7.
16 E. IV.

The careful father, who appears to have had money transactions with the Pastons, thus writes to Sir John :—

“ TO MY RIGHT WORSHIPFUL COUSIN, SIR JOHN PASTON, Kt.,
be this Letter delivered, &c.

“ Right worshipful, and my heartily well-beloved Cousin,—
I recommend me unto you, desiring to hear of your welfare, which I pray God may be as continually good as I would have mine own ; and, Cousin, the cause of my writing unto you at this time is I feel (perceive) well by my cousin John Paston, your brother, that ye have understanding of a matter which is in communication, touching a marriage, with God’s grace, to be concluded betwixt my said cousin your brother and my daughter Margery, which is far commenced and not yet concluded, nor neither shall nor may be till I have answer from you again of your good will and assent to the said matter ; and also of the obligation which that I send you herewith : for, Cousin, I would be sorry to see my cousin your brother, or my daughter, driven to live so mean a life as they should do if the sixscore pounds should be paid (out) of their marriage

money : and, Cousin, I have taken myself so near in levying of this said sixscore pounds, that whereas I had laid up an £100 for the marriage of a younger daughter of mine, I have now lent the said £100 and £20 over that to my cousin your brother, to be paid again by such easy days as the obligation which I send you herewith specifies.

“And, Cousin, I were right loth to bestow so much upon one daughter that the other her sisters should fare the worse ; wherefore, Cousin, if ye will that this matter shall take effect under such form as my cousin your brother hath written unto you, I pray you put thereto your good will, and some of your cost, as I have done of mine more largely than ever I purpose to do to any two of her sisters, as God knoweth mine intent, whom I beseech to send you your levest (dearest) heart’s desire.

“Written at Topcroft, the 8th day of March, &c.,

“By your Cousin,

“THOMAS BREWS, Knight.”

TOPCROFT, *Saturday, 8th March, 1476.*

17 E. IV.

The aged mother of the Pastons was well worthy of the confidence of both her sons. Her life had been one of strange vicissitudes, but she had borne up bravely against worldly troubles, and was a firm and prudent spirit ; she struggled during her long widowhood to make the best of the fallen fortunes of her family. I have told her story in ‘Once upon a Time,’ and need not here repeat it. Whatever might have been the fickleness in his love matters of John of Gelston, his tenderness towards his mother is exemplary, as evinced in the following letter.

“TO MY RIGHT WORSHIPFUL MOTHER, MARGARET PASTON.

“Right worshipful Mother,—After all duties of recommendation, in as humble wise as I can, I beseech you of your daily

blessing. Mother, please it you to weet, that the cause that Dame Elizabeth Brews desireth to meet with you at Norwich, and not at Langley, as I appointed with you at my last being at Manteby, is by my means ; for my brother, Thomas Jermyn, which knoweth nought of the mate (match), telleth me that the causey ere ye can come to Rokenham Ferry is so overflowed that there is no man that may on ethe (in ease) pass it, though he be right well horsed ; which is no meet way for you to pass over, God defend (forbid) it. But all things reckoned, it shall be less cost to you to be at Norwich, as for a day or tweyn and pass not (not beyond), than to meet at Langley, where everything is dear ; and your horse may be sent home again the same Wednesday.

“ Mother, I beseech you, for diverse causes, that my sister Anne may come with you to Norwich. Mother, the matter is in a reasonable good way, and I trust with God’s mercy, and with your good help, that it shall take effect better to mine advantage than I told you at Manteby ; for I trow there is not a kinder woman living than I shall have to my mother-in-law if the matter take, nor yet a kinder father-in-law than I shall have, though he be hard to me as yet.

“ All the circumstances of the matter, which I trust to tell you at your coming to Norwich, could not be written in three leaves of paper, and ye know my lewd (poor) head well enough I may not write long, wherefore I fery over (defer) all things till I may await on you myself. I shall do tonnen (cause to be turned) into your place a dozen ale, and bread according, against Wednesday. If Sym might be forborne (spared), it were well done that he were at Norwich on Wednesday in the morning at market. Dame Elizabeth Brews shall lie at John Cook’s ; if it might please you, I would be glad that she might dine in your house on Thursday, for there should you have most secret talking.

“And, Mother, at the reverence of God, beware that ye be so purveyed for that ye take no cold by the way towards Norwich, for it is the most perilous March that ever was seen by any man’s days that now liveth; and I pray to Jesu preserve you and yours.

“Written at Topcroft, the 8th day of March.

“Your son and humble servant,

“JOHN PASTON.”

TOPCROFT, *Saturday, 8th of March, 1476-7.*

17 E. IV.

The marriage has taken place; the young couple, we trust, are happy, with their limited means, and their command of the buttery of Sir Thomas Brews. Six or seven years afterwards John Paston writes a letter to his mother, with which I conclude this long history. He was then the head of the family, for Sir John Paston had died in November, 1479.

“TO MY RIGHT WORSHIPFUL MOTHER, MARGARET PASTON.

“Right worshipful Mother,—In my most humble wise I recommend me to you, beseeching you of your daily blessing, and when I may I will, with as good will, be ready to recompense you for the costs that my huswife and I have put you to, as I am now bound to thank you for it, which I do in the best wise I can. And, Mother, it pleased you to have certain words to my wife at her departing, touching your remembrance of the shortness that ye think your days of, and also of the mind ye have towards my brethren and sister your children, and also of your servants, wherein ye willed her to be a mean to me that I would tender and favour the same. Mother, saving your pleasure, there needeth not ambassadors nor means betwixt you and me, for there is neither wife nor other friend shall make me to do that, that your commandment shall make me to do, if I may have knowledge of it; and if I have no know-

ledge, in good faith I am excusable both to God and you ; and, well remembered, I wot well, ye ought not to have me in jealousy for one thing nor other that ye would have me to accomplish, if I overlive you ; for I wot well none man alive hath called so oft upon you as I to make your will and put each thing in certainty, that ye would have done for yourself, and to your children and servants. Also at the making of your will, and at every communication that I have been at with you touching the same, I never contraried (contradicted) anything that ye would have done and performed, but always offered myself to be bound to the same ; but, Mother, I am right glad that my wife is anything (in) your favour or trust, but I am right sorry that my wife, or any other child or servant of yours, should be in better favour or trust with you than myself, for I will and must forbear, and put from me that, that all your other children, servants, priests, workmen, and friends of yours, that ye will aught bequeath to, shall take to them, and this have I, and ever will be ready unto while I live, on my faith, and never thought other, so God be my help ; whom I beseech to preserve you and send you so good life and long, that ye may do for yourself and me after my decease ; and I beshrew (curse) their hearts that would other, or I shall cause you to mistrust or to be unkind to me or my friends.

“ At Norwich, this Monday, with the hand of your son and truest servant,

“ JOHN PASTON.”

NORWICH, *Monday, between 1482 and 1484.*

21 E. IV. and 2 R. III.

INTERCHAPTER A.

SIR JOHN DINELY, BARONET.

A SHADOW OF A WIFE-SEEKER.

* * * The present interchapter is, in some respects, a deviation from the strict plan of this work, as pursued in the previous volume. It is not given as a specimen of 'The best Letter-writers,' for it contains only two short notes; and certainly it does not aspire to rank as a contribution from one of the best Autobiographers. But as the subject of the Interchapter is that of a remarkable character with whom I was acquainted in my days of boyhood, it may not be deemed impertinent in me here to introduce him. A friend lately observed to me, that I had made no mention of Sir John Dinely in my 'Passages of a Working Life,' which, as a native of Windsor, he considered to be an omission which ought to be remedied. I trust that, if this article should here be deemed out of place, it may still possess some interest for readers who have no local recollections to induce a lenient judgment upon the question of its value.

INTERCHAPTER A.

SIR JOHN DINELY, BARONET;

A SHADOW OF A WIFE-SEEKER.

IF John Paston had not been living in the days when newspapers were unknown, it is just possible that his eagerness to make his matrimonial desires widely understood might have led to his becoming an advertiser for a wife. I have placed this Interchapter in juxtaposition with the story of the amorous adventurer of the fifteenth century, because I have to relate how a Baronet who lived to the nineteenth century devoted all his energies to the pursuit of a matrimonial alliance that should bring him riches, and thus enable him to recover possession of the large estates which had passed away from him. The parallel is not very well defined, but it is close enough for my immediate purpose. Before, however, I proceed to Sir John Dinely, let me speak a little of Samuel Foote, who was his cousin.

If brevity be the soul of wit, Samuel Foote, the great mimetic satirist, is entitled to a place amongst the "best letter-writers." I have searched diligently but in vain for any of his letters to his contemporaries in that interesting period which may be designated as the Johnsonian era. Two scraps of his correspondence are nevertheless preserved in the rambling memoirs of 'Samuel Foote, Esq.,' by William Cooke, known as "Conversation Cooke," printed for Richard Phillips in 1805. In these memoirs Foote's mother is represented as bearing a striking physical resemblance to her son, and being also very

like him in wit and improvidence. Mr. Cooke says, "Under one of her temporary embarrassments she wrote the following laconic epistle to our hero; which, with his answer, exhibit no bad specimen of the thoughtless dispositions of the two characters:—

"DEAR SAM,—I am in prison for debt: come and assist your loving mother,

"E. FOOTE."

"DEAR MOTHER,—So am I; which prevents his duty being paid to his loving mother by her affectionate son,

"SAM. FOOTE.

"P.S. I have sent my attorney to assist you; in the mean time let us hope for better days."

Samuel Foote was born at Truro about 1720. His father, John Foote, had been member of parliament for Tiverton, and was an influential magistrate in Cornwall. His mother was a daughter of Sir Edward Goodere, baronet, who, by marriage, was connected with the ancient stock of the Dinelys, of Charlton in Worcestershire. On the 17th of January, 1741, a frightful tragedy occurred at Bristol in the murder of Sir John Dinely Goodere by his brother, Captain Goodere, who hurried the unfortunate man on board his ship then lying in King's Road, where he was pitilessly strangled by ruffians previously hired for the express purpose. Upon this event Samuel Foote and his mother became the inheritors of the large estates of the murdered man, who was her brother. I shall have to relate more fully some details of this assassination, but meanwhile I present from Mr. Cooke's memoir of Foote a remarkable anecdote of a mysterious character. Mr. Cooke represents Foote to have been married very early in his life, of which fact of the marriage Mr. John Forster, in his most able Biographical Essay on Foote, throws considerable doubt.

Mr. Cooke says,—“The following curious circumstance took place soon after this marriage. He and his wife were invited by his father to spend a month with him in Cornwall; when, very much to their surprise, on the first night, as they were going to bed, they were entertained with a concert of music, seemingly under their window, executed in a capital style. This lasted about twenty minutes. On relating the circumstance next morning to the father, and complimenting him upon his gallantry, he absolutely denied any knowledge of the affair, and doubted the possibility of its occurring. The young couple, however, were positive as to what they had heard; and our hero was so impressed by it, that he made a memorandum of the time, which afterwards turned out to be the very night of his uncle, Sir John Dinely Goodere, being murdered by his unnatural brother. Foote always asserted the fact of this occurrence with a most striking gravity of belief, though he could by no means account for it. One day being asked whether he ought not to attribute it to a supernatural cause, he replied, ‘No; I never could bring my mind to that; but this I can tell you: it has made such an impression on me, that, if I once thought so, I would not be out of a convent a single day longer.’”

In Boswell’s ‘Life of Johnson’ the following passage occurs:—“He (Johnson) told us of Cooke, who translated Hesiod, and lived twenty years on a translation of Plautus, for which he was always taking subscriptions; and that he presented Foote to a club in the following singular manner: ‘This is the nephew of the gentleman who was lately hung in chains for murdering his brother.’” Upon this passage Mr. Croker has a note, in which he briefly relates the fact of the murder, and then adds the following remarks:—“The circumstances of this extravagant case, and some other facts connected with this family, lead to an opinion that Captain Goodere was insane

and some unhappy circumstances in Foote's life render it probable that he had not wholly escaped this hereditary irregularity of mind. The last baronet, who called himself Sir John Dinely, died in 1809, a Poor Knight of Windsor—insane and in indigence."

My own recollection of this remarkable Poor Knight of Windsor dates from the first or second year of the century. Early in the morning, before I crept unwillingly to my day-school, I was sent out for a run "up one hill and down the other," as we used to call the gentle ascent on the south side of the Round Tower, and the descent by St. George's Chapel, on the north. The houses opposite the chapel were those of the "Alms Knights," and out of one of them I have watched with a boyish curiosity the slow steps of an elderly man coming out of his own house, carefully locking doors after him, and then proceeding towards the town. He stumped along upon pattens; he was wrapped in the cloak known as a roquelaure; his object was to purchase a scanty store of necessities for his daily wants, which he mostly obtained from a grocer's shop in Castle Street. Under his ample cloak he concealed the farthing candles, the penny loaf, the ounce of butter, and on rare occasions the rasher of bacon. On his return he waited in his solitary chamber till the toll for Morning Prayer at the chapel again called him forth.

Very punctual was Sir John Dinely in the discharge of the routine of devotion required of a Poor Knight. It was prescribed by the statutes of the Order of the Garter that the thirteen Poor Knights should "come together before noon and afternoon daily at all the Divine Service said within the college."

Although very nearly sixty years have passed since I looked upon Sir John Dinely, his image occasionally haunts me with a singular familiarity. The old man must have made a strong

impression upon my imagination, to be thus reproduced with more than the distinctness of a shadow of my morning twilight. I not only see him as I have just described, in his personal provision for the humblest necessities; but I behold him, in a faded suit of embroidered silk, walking on Windsor Terrace in the midst of tittering crowds, and lifting his cocked hat reverently to some lady who has attracted his attention. His demeanour is courtly and dignified, his aspect is grave as becomes one engaged in a business of high importance. His features were preserved in my father's house long after the man was dead; for an artist of the name of Hopkins had induced him to submit to the painful operation of having a plaster-cast taken from his face, from which a few copies of his likeness were produced. But the outward characteristics of Sir John Dinely are not more fixed in my memory than my recollection of his powers of conversation. He was to me—a youth of sixteen or seventeen years—something more than the study of an eccentric individual. Mysterious as he always was about the great misfortune of his life, he had many anecdotes to tell of personages with whom he had been associated before the time when he became a Poor Knight of Windsor. Of Samuel Foote he made frequent mention. Where he was educated I never learnt, nor how he had been supported. He had unquestionably some knowledge of physic, but whether he had studied the healing art as a profession was not amongst his disclosures.

In a publication of 1803—‘Kirby’s Wonderful Museum’—it is stated that Sir John Dinely had been “incessantly advertising for a wife for nearly twenty years.” The same publication states that he once practised physic; and that “books of the medicinal art are still purchased by him when he attends sales.” Sir John’s habit during his residence in London of frequenting Vauxhall and the theatres is also noticed. It is

added—in a sentence which conveys the impression that the decayed baronet was supported by persons of social importance — “ Lord Fitzwilliam, it is said, is among the numbers of Sir John’s benefactors, as he makes him an allowance of ten pounds per annum.”

In the obscurity which thus surrounds the authentic history of Sir John Dinely, I may be permitted, without passing the bounds of probability, to conjure up a shadow of this unfortunate man before he became “ indigent and insane.” In the absence of all testimony, I incline to the opinion that the child of the murderer was brought up, probably under another name, in some connection with Samuel Foote, who was not likely to desert one whose misfortunes had made him rich.

Mr. William Cooke, in his rambling but not uninteresting ‘Memoirs of Samuel Foote,’ thus relates his hero’s commencement as an author :—

“ The first effort of Foote’s pen seemed to mark the future eccentricities of his character. This was a narrative of the murder of his uncle, Sir John Dinely Goodere, in which he undertook the defence of his other uncle, Captain Samuel Goodere, who was executed for this crime on the fullest and clearest evidence. Why he should have singled out this subject, so disgraceful to himself and family, for his maiden effort, may at first view appear so profligate and absurd, as to be a subject of perpetual charge against him : but though I by no means intend to defend the decency or morality of this action, some extenuation may be made for so whimsical a genius.

“ When he was induced to write this pamphlet he was a very young man, immersed in all the follies of the times, and had just outrun his first fortune. In these distressed circumstances, without trade or profession, and when perhaps bor-

rowing could go no further, he was solicited by a bookseller in the Old Bailey, with the powerful inducement of ten pounds in hand and ten more on the sale reaching a stipulated extent, to write upon this subject, which was the popular story of the day, and of which he was supposed to be more intimately informed than any other person, from his near connection with the parties. The event was likewise no secret to the world; it was already in everybody's mouth; and the pamphlet was published without his name, which saved him the open disgrace which would attach to him from the circumstance of his being known as author.

“It may be supposed too, that, in attempting to defend the character of his uncle Samuel from the charge of his brother's murder, he might imagine himself employed in wiping away a stain from his family: for though the evidence against this unhappy man was strong, and at the time incontrovertible, there might be a *possibility* of his innocence; which whether the writer believed or not, he might hope that his ingenuity could so manage it as partly to withdraw the public odium from his memory.”

It would seem pretty evident that Mr. Cooke, in giving his moral reflections upon this singular experiment in authorship, had not made himself acquainted with the pamphlet in question. Had he given a single extract to show that the object of Foote was “to defend his uncle Samuel from the charge of his brother's murder,” and to suggest the possibility of his innocence however strong the evidence against him, there might have been some disgrace in such an impudent denial of facts patent to all the world. Mr. Forster states that after much research he could not procure this pamphlet. He could only find a very commonplace account of the tragedy. But let us suppose that Foote's object was, not to show that Captain Goodere was innocent of the crime, but that the plea

of insanity might be set up in its extenuation. This was the theory of Mr. Croker; and if Foote had written his pamphlet in support of this belief, he might have been instigated by a motive of a generous nature. It is clear that the unhappy murderer had left a son; it is probable that the boy would have had much to struggle with in his future life, had this extenuation of his father's crime been wanting. Under any circumstances the poor boy would have been an object of compassion; but the father's crime would have demanded some tenderness towards the son, had that crime been the act of a madman. As the act of a brutal ruffian under a full consciousness of what he was about, the son, whenever he appeared in society, would have inspired some feeling approaching to abhorrence, however unphilosophical and unchristian such a sentiment might have been.

According to my own impression, Sir John Dinely must have been about seventy-five years of age at the period of his decease in 1809. The murder of his uncle having been committed in 1741, the boy must have been about six years of age at that period. Foote at the same time had just attained his majority. With the natural impulses therefore of a young man of talent and education, he would have felt it incumbent upon him to have become in some sort the protector of his unfortunate cousin. His habits of expense had very soon plunged him into difficulties, and then he was in great degree a broken reed for the orphan-boy to rest upon. The family estates had gone away from Dinely when the entail was cut off by his uncle. The baronetcy, without property to support it, would be his miserable inheritance. In one of his extraordinary advertisements for a wife, he alludes to a popular belief that by the crime of his father the family estates had lapsed to the Crown. The following is from the 'Reading Mercury' of May 24th, 1802 :—

“ Miss in her Teens.—Let not this sacred offer escape your eye. I now call all qualified ladies, marriageable, to chocolate at my house every day at your own hour.—With tears in my eyes, I must tell you that sound reason commands me to give you but one month’s notice before I part with my chance of an infant Baronet for ever: for you may readily hear that three widows and old maids all aged above fifty, near my door, are now pulling caps for me. Pray, my young charmers, give me a fair hearing; do not let your avaricious guardians unjustly fright you with a false account of a *forfeiture*, but let the great Sewel and Rivet’s opinions convince you to the contrary; and that I am now in legal possession of these estates.”

In one of his handbills he is more circumstantial as to the nature of his possessions. “An eminent attorney here is lately returned from a view of my very superb gates before my capital house, built in the form of the Queen’s House. I have ordered him, or the next eminent attorney here, who can satisfy you of my possession in my estate, and every desirable particular concerning it, to make you the most liberal settlement you can desire, to the vast extent of three hundred thousand pounds.”

Mr. Croker describes the murder as an “*extravagant case*.” It was, in many remarkable circumstances, very far removed from ordinary cases of murder. The criminal, although he may in most instances have been cunning enough to provide against the principal circumstances that would lead to discovery, generally leaves some trace of his guilty footsteps. But this crime could not have been planned without an absolute certainty of detection, and therefore may be regarded as the act of a madman. Let me, as briefly as I can, recapitulate the evidence given on the trial of Samuel Goodere, Esq., and Matthew Mahony, at the Sessions held before the Mayor and Recorder of the City of Bristol, on the 25th March, 1741.

Mr. Jarit Smith, attorney-at-law, deposed that he had invited the deceased, on the Sunday before this murder was committed, to dine at his house on the Sunday following; that Captain Goodere, having heard of this invitation, earnestly entreated that he might be admitted to the company of his brother, that they might accommodate their differences in an amicable manner. Mr. Smith went to the Captain, who was at the College Green coffee-house, and was so pleased with the proposition, that he had no hesitation in introducing the prisoner into the company of his brother. After the three had dined together, Smith left them for an hour, and upon being called in, stayed awhile whilst they all smoked a pipe. About six o'clock in the evening Mr. Goodere took his leave of Sir John in the most friendly and affectionate manner.

The testimony of Charles Bryant was to the effect that he, with five others, was hired by Captain Goodere to seize the deceased, and forcibly to run him aboard the 'Ruby' man-of-war, then lying in King's Road. At the White Hart, on College Green, these men had a handsome dinner, and afterwards went into the balcony of the inn, which was immediately opposite Mr. Smith's house. Here they waited for a signal from Captain Goodere, which being given, they followed the deceased, and, rushing upon him, dragged him towards the Rope-Walk, where was a gang of twelve more ready to assist. At the Hot-wells a boat was waiting to receive him.

Jones, the cooper of the 'Ruby,' deposed that — "The captain brought his brother, Sir John, on board, conveyed him down to the purser's cabin (which had been prepared for him the Thursday before), and caused him to be forced in, he groaning all the while.

"Shortly after, the captain called one of the carpenters to put two strong bolts on the purser's cabin-door, which was accordingly done, when Sir John asked if he could speak with

any of the officers. The man made answer, 'I am the carpenter.' Sir John asked 'if he could speak a word with him?' he replied, 'an hundred, if he pleased.' Sir John asked him 'What his brother Sam was going to do with him?—what! is he going to murder me?' The carpenter replied, 'No! he is willing to have your company, sir; he does it for your good.'

"Presently after, the captain came down again, and ordered the doctor's first mate to go and feel his pulse, saying, 'We must patch him up as well as we can; he is a crazy old man; go in and feel his pulse. Accordingly the doctor went, and, when he came out, the cabin-door was shut. After this I heard Sir John begging and praying 'for God to be comfortable to him in his afflictions, for that he believed he was going to be murdered, and hoped it would be brought to light, for that it was impossible it could be done without somebody hearing or seeing it.'

"I then went to bed, when about two or three in the morning my wife waked me, and I heard a vast struggling, and the old gentleman crying out, 'Twenty guineas—take it—take it—oh! must I die?' when very soon after all was quiet. Then a candle was handed into the cabin, and I saw, through the crevice of the partition, Mahony hold the candle in his hand, and White plunder Sir John's pockets. In about a minute after this I saw a *white hand* on the throat of the deceased, which I took to be the captain's, when presently all went out of the cabin, and left the deceased alone.

"Then I went to the doctor's mate and the sentry, and, by their opinion, they took the old gentleman to be dead; from thence I went to the lieutenant, and told him what I had heard and seen, and that Mahony and White had murdered the gentleman, and that I believed the captain was concerned. While we were talking, a midshipman came to acquaint the lieutenant that the captain had ordered White and Mahony

ashore, but he (the lieutenant) swore they should not go ashore, for that they were the two persons who killed the gentleman ; but the midshipman returning to the captain, he ordered 'that they should be put ashore immediately,' and accordingly they were." Such was the evidence of Jones the cooper.

About nine or ten in the morning the captain was secured. White was taken at the Bell, Marsh Street. About twelve o'clock at night they took Mahony at a private house, who, along with White, made a full confession of the murder, in which the captain appeared to be the contriver and principal abettor of the whole.

Upon the trial the captain pleaded the utmost innocence, alleging, "How could it be thought he could be guilty of the murder of his brother Sir John, whereas, by his death, he lost at least *forty thousand pounds*?"

In vindication of his causing Sir John to be seized, he urged that he was a lunatic, and therefore he did it in order to take better care of him ; that his being taken in the day-time on board was plain there was no secret design, or that he was to have any harm come to him ; that the people on board knew of his coming a week before ; therefore, he said, he must be very silly to bring a person before three hundred evidences to commit so vile an act, where nothing can be secret above four hours.

Let me quit this "extravagant case" of the captain of a king's ship causing his brother to be murdered in the presence of his officers and his crew, without any provision for his own escape from detection, or any arrangement for his flight from justice. Let me turn to the ill-fated son of this wretched father.

When I knew him in the last four years of his life, I had frequent opportunities of witnessing the glimmerings of a powerful mind, however bewildered by a monomania. He

was often assailed by the impertinence of idle youths, and sometimes of foolish men, not altogether belonging to the class of uneducated persons. I was always struck by his quickness of repartee, and by his ever-ready sarcasm. He could sting like a nettle when he was assailed by ridicule ; but if positive rudeness were offered him, he would turn away with silent contempt, manifested with a haughtiness that few even of the most impudent were willing to encounter a second time. Did he learn this power of sarcasm, often ironical, but always cutting, in the companionship of his cousin, Samuel Foote ?

In Mr. Cooke's three volumes there are some three hundred pages devoted to what he entitles 'Bon Mots, Characters, Opinions, &c., of Samuel Foote.' The *bon mots* are often very flat, as is generally the case when the truest wit is dissociated from the circumstances under which it was produced. In illustration of this defect, I may venture to say that many of the brilliant sallies attributed to Douglas Jerrold convey but a faint idea of the surprising readiness with which they were poured forth. From the enormous bundle of Foote's witticisms let me give two or three examples :—

"A gentleman praising the personal charms of a very plain woman before Foote, the latter, whispered him, 'And why don't you lay claim to such an accomplished beauty?' 'What right have I to her?' said the other. 'Every right, by the law of all nations, as the first discoverer.'"

"Previously to Foote's bringing out his Primitive Puppet-show at the Haymarket Theatre, a lady of fashion asked him, 'Pray, sir, are your puppets to be as large as life?' 'Oh, dear madam, no ; not much above the size of Garrick !'"

"A physician at Bath told him that he had a mind to publish his own poems, but he had so many irons in the fire, he did not well know what to do. 'Then take my advice, doctor,' said Foote, 'and put your poems where your irons are.'"

Foote, after he had run his course of senseless display, by which his fortune was squandered, recovered a position higher than that of a mere possessor of unexpected riches. In 1747 he became the manager of the Haymarket Theatre, appearing in the double character of author and performer. The entertainments with which he long delighted the town were too often deformed by personalities; but upon the whole there was a healthy tone about them, which exhibited vice and folly with an artistic power, such as made Hogarth, in another line, the most truthful censor of his age. Foote died about thirty-four years after the Bristol tragedy, so that Sir John Dinely might have known him for some twenty years after he became of age.

Whether their relationship was ever publicly avowed by Foote can only be matter of conjecture; but it is highly improbable that he should altogether have neglected his unoffending cousin. The young man for many reasons might have dropped the name of Goodere and taken that of Dinely, with a slight variation. In a most curious volume recently published by the Camden Society, entitled '*History in Marble*,' the antiquary who made drawings of monuments and copied inscriptions bore the name of Dingley. In a biographical notice prefixed to this interesting volume, it is said that Dingley belonged to the old family of Dinely. Young Sir John Dinely might, under the name of Dingley, have gone his humble road unnoticed, until his monomania was developed, and he came forth with the visions that he cherished until his death.

I have little more to say of the poor old man who went by the name of "The Windsor Advertiser."

On a morning of 1809 he was missing from his accustomed place in St. George's Chapel. After some interval his locked door was broken open, and he was found dead. No previous

signs of serious illness had been observed in him ; but near his wretched pallet was found the remains of a phial of medicine. It was his custom to prescribe for himself, which he probably did competently from his early experience in the healing art. I went with others into the house, into which no human being except himself had entered for many years. The dirt and disorder of that dwelling were not to be surpassed by the dingiest abodes of pauperism. But objects in his one occupied room presented themselves which were strikingly illustrative of his ruling passion, as they also indicated his perseverance in attempting an art of which he had no accurate knowledge, and no proper means of exercising it. The floor was strewn with printing-types. On that floor lay also the arranged types of one of his advertisements, wedged together in a rude frame. His mode of producing an impression was, after smearing the types with common ink, thickened into some consistency, to place his sheet of white paper over them, and then cover them with a board, upon which he stamped till some almost illegible characters were visible. Let me hope that, in his dying hour, Sir John Dinely was spared the remembrance of the awful scene on board the 'Ruby,' of which he could not have been ignorant, and that the ghastly vision of the *white hand* on the throat of his uncle might have been chased away by calmer and happier thoughts, with which he had become familiar in the daily service of St. George's Chapel.

CHAPTER II.

WILLIAM COWPER.

1. DIFFERENT CHARACTER OF HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES, AND OF HIS GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE.
 2. FIRST ATTACK OF COMPLETE INSANITY.
 3. RECOVERY AND RELAPSES.
 4. WARM AFFECTIONS—LADY HESKETH.
 5. THE UNWINS.
 6. LADY AUSTEN.
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LETTERS FROM COWPER ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

7. TO REV. WILLIAM UNWIN.
8. TO REV. JOHN NEWTON.
9. TO SAMUEL ROSE, ESQ.
10. TO MRS. THROCKMORTON.
11. TO THOMAS HAYLEY.
12. TO MRS. COWPER ON THE DEATH OF HER HUSBAND.

CHAPTER II.

WILLIAM COWPER.

I. — DIFFERENT CHARACTER OF HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL
SKETCHES AND OF HIS GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE.

THERE has probably never been written a piece of autobiography so melancholy as Cowper's narrative of his own mental sufferings: whilst few letters are more replete than his with playful vivacity, or display a more healthful interest in external things. The great charm of these letters—beyond the charm of their sound sense and graceful style—consists in the vivid picture which they offer to us of the writer's daily life, and every change of thought and feeling. There is nothing assumed. We feel that the words are the very reflection of the mind that formed them. As we read, the quiet couple in their ugly house at Olney, or in their pleasanter abode at Weston, become our personal friends; and we experience as much interest in the fit of the new periwig, and as much triumph in the achievements of "Beau," as if this were still the age of periwigs, and as if the most sagacious of spaniels had not lived and died in the last century. Cowper himself has said of his letters:—

"I can compare this mind of mine to nothing that resembles it more, than to a board that is under the carpenter's plane, (I mean while I am writing to you,) the shavings are my uppermost thoughts; after a few strokes of the tool, it acquires a new surface; this again, upon a repetition of his task, he takes off, and a new surface still succeeds: whether the shavings of the present day will be worth your acceptance, I know not; I am unfortunately made neither of cedar nor of mahogany, but *Truncus ficulnus, inutile lignum*; consequently, though I should be planed till I am as thin as a wafer, it will be but rubbish to the last."

The following passage in a letter to William Unwin, the friend to whom he wrote with the greatest unreserve, shows how every emotion of the poet's sensitive nature was reflected in his epistolary style :—

“ It is possible that I might have indulged myself in the pleasure of writing to you, without waiting for a letter from you, but for a reason which you will not easily guess. Your mother communicated to me the satisfaction you expressed in my correspondence, that you thought me entertaining, and clever, and so forth :—now, you must know, I love praise dearly, especially from the judicious, and those who have so much delicacy themselves as not to offend mine in giving it. But then, I found this consequence attending, or likely to attend, the eulogium you bestowed ;—if my friend thought me witty before, he shall think me ten times more witty hereafter ;—where I joked once, I will joke five times, and for one sensible remark I will send him a dozen. Now this foolish vanity would have spoiled me quite, and would have made me as disgusting a letter-writer as Pope, who seems to have thought that unless a sentence was well turned, and every period pointed with some conceit, it was not worth the carriage. Accordingly he is to me, except in very few instances, the most disagreeable maker of epistles that ever I met with. I was willing, therefore, to wait till the impression your commendation had made upon the foolish part of me was worn off, that I might scribble away as usual, and write my uppermost thoughts, and those only.”

In another letter he says :—

“ When I write to a stranger, I feel myself deprived of half my intellects. I suspect that I shall write nonsense, and I do so. I tremble at the thought of an inaccuracy, and become absolutely ungrammatical. I feel myself sweat. I have recourse to the knife and the pounce. I correct half a dozen blunders,

which in a common case I could not have committed, and have no sooner dispatched what I have written, than I recollect how much better I could have made it; how easily and genteelly I could have relaxed the stiffness of the phrase, and have cured the insufferable awkwardness of the whole, had they struck me a little earlier. Thus we stand in awe of we know not what, and miscarry through mere desire to excel."

These are evidently not groundless fancies. In each letter we can trace the influence—either genial or chilling—of the person addressed. It is this peculiarity which renders Cowper's correspondence so interesting as a psychological study.

Anything approaching to a true estimate of the character of this loveable and most pitiable man, as exhibited in his letters, can only be formed by a careful comparison of the two most striking features which those letters present—warm affections, and a morbid self-consciousness. Nothing is more remarkable in this remarkable life than the conflict between the loving heart and the distempered brain. Whenever the expressions of friendship are most abundant, the mental disorder is least apparent; and when that is dominant, the affections appear to slumber. In illustration of these remarks, we propose to give a few of Cowper's letters which display the warmth of his friendships, as well as some which exhibit the depth of his mental despondency. A few extracts of an autobiographical nature will best introduce and explain both the light and dark side of the picture.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

To Mrs. King, a lady with whom he had gladly entered into correspondence, as having been a friend of his brother, then dead, he writes from Weston Underwood:—

"There is nothing in my story that can possibly be worth your knowledge; yet, lest I should seem to treat you with a reserve which, at your hands, I have not experienced, such as it is, I will relate it. I was bred to the law; a profession to which I was never much inclined, and in which I engaged

rather because I was desirous to gratify a most indulgent father, than because I had any hopes of success in it myself. I spent twelve years in the Temple, where I made no progress in that science, to cultivate which I was sent thither. During this time my father died. Not long after him, died my mother-in-law; and at the expiration of it, a melancholy seized me, which obliged me to quit London, and consequently to renounce the bar. I lived some time at St. Alban's. After having suffered in that place long and extreme affliction, the storm was suddenly dispelled, and the same day-spring from on high which has arisen upon you, arose on me also. I spent eight years in the enjoyment of it; and have ever since the expiration of those eight years, been occasionally the prey of the same melancholy as at first. In the depths of it I wrote the 'Task,' and the volume which preceded it; and in the same deeps am now translating Homer. But to return to St. Alban's. I abode there a year and a half. Thence I went to Cambridge, where I spent a short time with my brother, in whose neighbourhood I determined, if possible, to pass the remainder of my days. He soon found a lodging for me at Huntingdon. At that place I had not resided long, when I was led to an intimate connexion with a family of the name of Unwin. I soon quitted my lodging, and took up my abode with them. I had not lived long under their roof, when Mr. Unwin, as he was riding one Sunday morning to his cure at Gravely, was thrown from his horse; of which fall he died. Mrs. Unwin having the same views of the Gospel as myself, and being desirous of attending a purer ministration of it than was to be found at Huntingdon, removed to Olney, where Mr. Newton was at that time the preacher, and I with her. There we continued till Mr. Newton, whose family was the only one in the place with which we could have a connexion, and with whom we lived always on the most intimate

terms, left it. After his departure, finding the situation no longer desirable, and our house threatening to fall upon our heads, we removed hither. Here we have a good house, in a most beautiful village, and, for the greatest part of the year, a most agreeable neighbourhood. Like you, madam, I stay much at home, and have not travelled twenty miles from this place and its environs, more than once these twenty years."

In this letter to a stranger we can trace some evidence of "the knife and the pounce." There is certainly a stiffness of phrase in remarkable contrast to the ease with which he expresses himself to his more familiar correspondents. The melancholy which he mentions as having obliged him to quit London, was not the first attack of that fatal disease which, except during one interval, preyed upon his mind with more or less intensity for the whole of his subsequent life. Its commencement is described in those *Memoirs* which he wrote at the request of friends, who, in their desire to benefit others by the narrative of Cowper's religious experiences, seem to have overlooked the perilous effect of such introspection on a mind like his.

MORBID SYMPTOMS.

"I was struck, not long after my settlement in the Temple, with such a dejection of spirits, as none but they who have felt the same can have the least conception of. Day and night I was upon the rack, lying down in horror, and rising up in despair. I presently lost all relish for those studies to which I had before been closely attached; the classics had no longer any charms for me; I had need of something more salutary than amusement, but I had no one to direct me where to find it."

Change of scene was recommended to him, and during several months spent in the country this oppression of spirits departed, to return with redoubled force some years later. In 1763 the clerkship of the Journals of the House of Commons was offered to him by his cousin, Major Cowper. He had previously accepted two more profitable places, also

in the gift of his cousin, but after a week of perplexity between the desire not to cast away a provision of which he was then in great need, and a sense of incapacity for business of a public nature, he resigned the more lucrative offices, and begged instead for the appointment to the clerkship, of which the business was transacted in private. Having, before this office became vacant, expressed a desire to hold it, he regarded his subsequent sufferings as a punishment :—

“Thus did I covet what God had commanded me not to covet; and involved myself in still deeper guilt by doing it in the spirit of a murderer. It pleased the Lord to give me my heart’s desire, and in it and with it an immediate punishment of my crime.”

Some opposition having arisen to Major Cowper’s right of nomination, it became necessary that his nominee should be examined at the Bar of the House as to his fitness for the post :—

“All the horrors of my fears and perplexities now returned. A thunderbolt would have been as welcome to me as this intelligence. I knew, to demonstration, that upon these terms the clerkship of the journals was no place for me. To require my attendance at the bar of the House, that I might there publicly entitle myself to the office, was, in effect, to exclude me from it. In the mean time, the interest of my friend, the honour of his choice, my own reputation and circumstances, all urged me forward, all pressed me to undertake that which I saw to be impracticable. They whose spirits are formed like mine, to whom a public exhibition of themselves, on any occasion, is mortal poison, may have some idea of the terrors of my situation; others can have none.

“My continual misery at length brought on a nervous fever; quiet forsook me by day, and peace by night; a finger raised against me, was more than I could stand against. In this posture of mind, I attended regularly at the office; where,

instead of a soul upon the rack, the most active spirits were essentially necessary for my purpose. I expected no assistance from anybody there, all the inferior clerks being under the influence of my opponent; and accordingly I received none. The journal books were indeed thrown open to me; a thing which could not be refused; and from which, perhaps, a man in health, and with a head turned to business, might have gained all the information he wanted; but it was not so with me. I read without perception, and was so distressed, that had every clerk in the office been my friend, it could have availed me little; for I was not in a condition to receive instruction, much less to elicit it out of manuscripts, without direction. Many months went over me thus employed; constant in the use of means, despairing as to the issue.

“The feelings of a man, when he arrives at the place of execution, are probably much like mine, ever since I set my foot in the office, which was every day for more than half a year together.”

2.—FIRST ATTACK OF COMPLETE INSANITY.

Change of scene again relieved his distress, but on the resumption of his labours his misery recommenced:—

“I felt myself pressed by necessity on either side, with nothing but despair in prospect. To this dilemma was I reduced,—either to keep possession of the office to the last extremity, and by so doing expose myself to a public rejection for insufficiency (for the little knowledge I had acquired would have quite forsaken me at the bar of the house :) or else to fling it up at once, and by this means run the hazard of ruining my benefactor's right of appointment, by bringing his discretion into question. In this situation, such a fit of passion has sometimes seized me, when alone in my chambers,

that I have cried out aloud, and cursed the hour of my birth ; lifting up my eyes to heaven, at the same time, not as a suppliant, but in the hellish spirit of rancorous reproach and blasphemy against my Maker. A thought would sometimes come across my mind, that my sins had perhaps brought this distress upon me,—that the hand of divine vengeance was in it ; but in the pride of my heart I presently acquitted myself, and thereby implicitly charged God with injustice, saying, ‘What sins have I committed to deserve this?’

* * * * *

“I now began to look upon madness as the only chance remaining. I had a strong foreboding that so it would fare with me, and I wished for it earnestly, and looked forward to it with impatient expectation.

* * * * *

“My chief fear was, that my senses would not fail me time enough to excuse my appearance at the bar of the House of Lords, which was the only purpose I wanted it to answer. Accordingly the day of decision drew near, and I was still in my senses ; though in my heart I had formed many wishes, and by word of mouth expressed many expectations to the contrary.

“Now came the grand temptation ; the point to which Satan had all the while been driving me ; the dark and hellish purpose of self-murder. * * * Being reconciled to the apprehension of madness, I began to be reconciled to the apprehension of death. Though formerly, in my happiest hours, I had never been able to glance a single thought that way, without shuddering at the idea of dissolution, I now wished for it, and found myself but little shocked at the idea of procuring it myself. Perhaps, thought I, there is no God ; or if there be, the Scriptures may be false ; if so, then God

has nowhere forbidden suicide. I considered life as my property, and therefore at my own disposal."

Being confirmed in this idea by the accidental concurrence in it of two strangers whom he met in public, he procured a phial of laudanum which he kept in his pocket ready for use, should no other means of escape occur. The day before that appointed for the dreaded ordeal, "being at Richards' coffee-house at breakfast," he says:—

"I read the newspaper, and in it a letter, which, the farther I perused it, the more closely engaged my attention. I cannot now recollect the purport of it; but before I had finished it, it appeared demonstratively true to me that it was a libel, or satire upon me. The author appeared to be acquainted with my purpose of self-destruction, and to have written that letter on purpose to secure and hasten the execution of it. My mind, probably, at this time began to be disordered; however it was, I was certainly given up to a strong delusion. I said within myself, 'Your cruelty shall be gratified; you shall have your revenge!' and, flinging down the paper in a fit of strong passion, I rushed hastily out of the room, directing my way towards the fields, where I intended to find some house to die in; or, if not, determined to poison myself in a ditch, when I could meet with one sufficiently retired."

His repeated attempts at suicide were all frustrated by his courage failing, or his purpose changing at the most critical moment. At last,

"I went to bed to take, as I thought, my last sleep in this world. The next morning was to place me at the bar of the House, and I determined not to see it. I slept as usual, and awoke about three o'clock. Immediately I arose, and, by the help of a rushlight, found my penknife, took it into bed with me, and lay with it for some hours directly pointed against my heart. Twice or thrice I placed it upright under my left

breast, leaning all my weight upon it; but the point was broken off square, and it would not penetrate.

"In this manner the time passed, till the day began to break. I heard the clock strike seven, and instantly it occurred to me there was no time to be lost: the chambers would soon be opened, and my friend would call upon me to take me with him to Westminster. 'Now is the time,' thought I, 'this is the crisis, no more dallying with the love of life.'"

After two ineffectual attempts, he succeeded in hanging himself by his garter to an angle of the door.

"While I hung there, I distinctly heard a voice say three times, '*'Tis over!*' Though I am sure of the fact, and was so at the time, yet it did not at all alarm me, or affect my resolution. I hung so long that I lost all sense, all consciousness of existence.

"When I came to myself again, I thought myself in hell; the sound of my own dreadful groans was all that I heard, and a feeling, like that produced by a flash of lightning, just beginning to seize upon me, passed over my whole body. In a few seconds I found myself fallen on my face to the floor. In about half a minute I recovered my feet; and reeling, and staggering, stumbled into bed again."

On the arrival of his laundress, he sent her to a friend,—

"to whom I related the whole affair, and despatched him to my kinsman, at the coffee-house. As soon as the latter arrived, I pointed to the broken garter, which lay in the middle of the room, and apprized him also of the attempt I had been making. His words were, 'My dear Mr. Cowper, you terrify me! To be sure you cannot hold the office at this rate,—where is the deputation?' I gave him the key of the drawer where it was deposited; and his business requiring his imme-

diate attendance, he took it away with him ; and thus ended all my connection with the Parliament office."

Now that he was thus relieved from all fear of that which his diseased imagination had magnified into a danger only to be escaped by death, his mental distemper took a new form :—

"Before I arose from bed, it was suggested to me that there was nothing wanted but murder, to fill up the measure of my iniquities ; and that, though I had failed in my design, yet I had all the guilt of that crime to answer for. A sense of God's wrath, and a deep despair of escaping it, instantly succeeded. The fear of death became much more prevalent in me than ever the desire of it had been.

* * * * *

"One moment I thought myself shut out from mercy by one Chapter [of the Bible] ; and the next, by another. The sword of the Spirit seemed to guard the Tree of Life from my touch, and to flame against me in every avenue by which I attempted to approach it. I particularly remember that the parable of the barren fig-tree was to me an inconceivable source of anguish ; I applied it to myself, with a strong persuasion in my mind that when the Saviour pronounced a curse upon it he had me in his eye, and pointed that curse directly at me.

* * * * *

"I never went into the street, but I thought the people stared and laughed at me, and held me in contempt ; and I could hardly persuade myself but that the voice of my conscience was loud enough for every one to hear it. They who knew me seemed to avoid me, and if they spoke to me, they seemed to do it in scorn. I bought a ballad of one who was singing it in the street, because I thought it was written on me.

* * * * *

“My thoughts in the day became still more gloomy, and my night visions more dreadful. One morning, as I lay between sleeping and waking, I seemed to myself to be walking in Westminster Abbey, waiting till prayers should begin; presently I thought I heard the minister’s voice, and hastened towards the choir; just as I was upon the point of entering, the iron gate under the organ was flung in my face, with a jar that made the Abbey ring; the noise awoke me; and a sense of excommunication from all the churches upon earth could not have been so dreadful to me as the interpretation which I could not avoid putting upon this dream.

* * * * *

“Having an obscure notion of the efficacy of faith, I resolved upon an experiment, to prove whether I had faith or not. For this purpose I resolved to repeat the Creed; when I came to the second period of it, all traces of the former were struck out of my memory, nor could I recollect one syllable of the matter. While I endeavoured to recover it, and when just upon the point, I perceived a sensation in my brain, like a tremulous vibration in all the fibres of it. By this means I lost the words in the very instant when I thought to have laid hold of them. This threw me into an agony; but growing a little calmer, I made an attempt for the third time, here again I failed in the same manner as before.

“I considered it as a supernatural interposition to inform me that, having sinned against the Holy Ghost, I had no longer any interest in Christ, or in the gifts of the Spirit. Being assured of this, with the most rooted conviction, I gave myself up to despair. I felt a sense of burning in my heart, like that of real fire, and concluded it was an earnest of those eternal flames which would soon receive me. I laid myself down, howling with horror, while my knees smote against each other.”

A conversation with a pious friend soothed him for a time, but only for a time:—

“What I had experienced was but the beginning of sorrows, and a long train of still greater terrors was at hand. I slept my usual three hours well, and then awoke with ten times a stronger alienation from God than ever.

“Satan plied me close with horrible visions, and more horrible voices. My ears rang with the sound of torments that seemed to await me. Then did the ‘pains of hell get hold on me,’ and before daybreak the very ‘sorrows of death encompassed me.’ A numbness seized upon the extremities of my body, and life seemed to retreat before it; my hands and feet became cold and stiff, a cold sweat stood upon my forehead, my heart seemed at every pulse to beat its last, and my soul to cling to my lips, as if on the very brink of departure. No convicted criminal ever feared death more, or was more assured of dying.

“At eleven o’clock my brother called upon me, and in about an hour after his arrival, that distemper of mind which I had so ardently wished for, actually seized me.

“While I traversed the apartment, in the most horrible dismay of soul, expecting every moment that the earth would open her mouth and swallow me, my conscience scaring me, the avenger of blood pursuing me, and the city of refuge out of reach and out of sight, a strong and terrible darkness fell upon me. If it were possible that a heavy blow could light on the brain, without touching the skull, such was the sensation I felt. I clapped my hand to my forehead, and cried aloud, through the pain it gave me. At every stroke my thoughts and expressions became more wild and indistinct; all that remained clear was the sense of sin, and the expectation of punishment. These kept undisturbed possession all through my illness, without interruption or abatement.”

E

3.—RECOVERY AND RELAPSES.

In this state Cowper was removed to a private asylum at St. Alban's, where he remained eighteen months. Under the wise physical and mental treatment of Dr. Cotton he was gradually restored to perfect health, and to as sound a state of mind as is possible where an inherent disease is merely slumbering. In this case the slumber lasted for eight years, during which time he wrote of himself:—

“As to my own personal condition, I am much happier than the day is long, and sunshine and candlelight see me perfectly contented. I get books in abundance, as much company as I choose, a deal of *comfortable leisure*, and enjoy better health, I think, than for many years past. What is there wanting to make me happy? Nothing, if I can but be as thankful as I ought; and I trust that He who has bestowed so many blessings upon me, will give me gratitude to crown them all.”

The letter to Major Cowper in which this passage occurs was written from Huntingdon in October, 1765. In 1767 Cowper removed with Mrs. Unwin to Olney, where, it is said, “Mr. Newton used to consider him as a sort of curate, from his constant attendance upon the sick and afflicted in that large and necessitous parish.” The death of his brother, in the spring of 1770, gave a shock to his mind, which soon brought back all the old morbid symptoms; and by the beginning of 1773 he was again decidedly insane. Of this attack he thus writes to his cousin, Lady Hesketh:—

“In the year '73, the same scene that was acted at St. Alban's, opened upon me again at Olney, only covered with a still deeper shade of melancholy, and ordained to be of much longer duration. I was suddenly reduced from my wonted rate of understanding to an almost childish imbecility. I did not, indeed, lose my senses, but I lost the power to exercise them. I could return a rational answer even to a difficult question, but a question was necessary, or I never spoke at all. This

state of mind was accompanied, as I suppose it to be in most instances of the kind, with misapprehension of things and persons that made me a very untractable patient. I believed that everybody hated me, and that Mrs. Unwin hated me most of all, was convinced that all my food was poisoned, together with ten thousand megrims of the same stamp. I would not be more circumstantial than is necessary. Dr. Cotton was consulted. He replied that he could do no more for me than might be done at Olney, but recommended particular vigilance, lest I should attempt my life :—a caution for which there was the greatest occasion. At the same time that I was convinced of Mrs. Unwin's aversion to me, I could endure no other companion. * * * It will be thirteen years, in little more than a week, since this malady seized me. Methinks I hear you ask,—your affection for me will, I know, make you wish to do so,—Is it removed? I reply, in great measure, but not quite. Occasionally I am much distressed, but that distress becomes continually less frequent, and I think less violent. I find writing, and especially poetry, my best remedy. Perhaps, had I understood music, I had never written verse, but had lived upon fiddle-strings instead. It is better, however, as it is. A poet may, if he pleases, be of a little use in the world, while a musician, the most skilful, can only divert himself and a few others. I have been emerging gradually from this pit. As soon as I became capable of action I commenced carpenter, made cupboards, boxes, stools. I grew weary of this in about a twelvemonth, and addressed myself to the making of bird-cages. To this employment succeeded that of gardening, which I intermingled with that of drawing, but finding that the latter occupation injured my eyes, I renounced it, and commenced poet. I have given you, my dear, a little history in shorthand ; I know that it will touch your feelings, but do not let it interest them too much. *In the year when I wrote the*

Task (for it occupied me about a year), *I was very often most supremely unhappy*, and am, under God, indebted in good part to that work for not having been much worse. You did not know what a clever fellow I am, and how I can turn my hand to anything."

This letter evinces a much healthier tone of mind than that in which the terrible narrative of his former sufferings was composed. But in writing to Mr. Newton on the same subject six months later, the fatal malady is again painfully apparent:—

"You say well, that there was a time when I was happy at Olney ; and I am now as happy at Olney as I expect to be anywhere without the presence of God. * * * But as for happiness, he that has once had communion with his Maker must be more frantic than ever I was yet, if he can dream of finding it at a distance from Him. I no more expect happiness at Weston than here, or than I should expect it, in company with felons and outlaws, in the hold of a ballast-lighter. Animal spirits, however, have their value, and are especially desirable to him who is condemned to carry a burthen, which at any rate will tire him, but which, without their aid, cannot fail to crush him. The dealings of God with me are to myself utterly unintelligible. I have never met, either in books or in conversation, with an experience at all similar to my own. More than a twelvemonth has passed since I began to hope that, having walked the whole breadth of the bottom of this Red Sea, I was beginning to climb the opposite shore, and I prepared to sing the Song of Moses. But I have been disappointed. Those hopes have been blasted ; those comforts have been wrested from me. I could not be so duped, even by the arch-enemy himself, as to be made to question the divine nature of them ; but I have been made to believe (which you will say is being duped still more) that God gave

them to me in derision, and took them away in vengeance. Such, however, is, and has been my persuasion many a long day ; and when I shall think on that subject more comfortably, or, as you will be inclined to tell me, more rationally and scripturally, I know not."

The terrible delusion which had remained fixed on his mind ever since his last attack, and which was never afterwards entirely removed, was that it had been God's will at that time that "he should, after the example of Abraham, perform an expensive act of obedience, and offer not a son, but himself." Having failed to perform this when the opportunity occurred, he believed that he was now doomed to everlasting perdition. Of this conviction he writes thus to his friend Mr. Bull:—

"Both your advice and your manner of giving it are gentle and friendly, and like yourself. I thank you for them, and do not refuse your counsel because it is not good, or because I dislike it ; but because it is not for me ; there is not a man upon earth that might not be the better for it, myself only excepted. Prove to me that I have a right to pray, and I will pray without ceasing ; yes, and praise, too, even in the belly of this hell, compared with which Jonah's was a palace, a temple of the living God. But let me add, there is no encouragement in the Scripture so comprehensive as to include my case, nor any consolation so effectual as to reach it. I do not relate it to you, because you could not believe it ; you would agree with me, if you could. And yet the sin by which I am excluded from the privileges I once enjoyed, you would account no sin, you would even tell me that it was a duty. This is strange ;—you will think me mad,—but I am not mad, most noble Festus, I am only in despair ; and those powers of mind which I possess are only permitted to me for my amusement at some times, and to acuminate and enhance my misery at others. I have not even asked a blessing upon my food these ten years, nor do I expect that I shall ever ask it again. Yet

I love you, and such as you, and determine to enjoy your friendship while I can :—it will not be long, we must soon part for ever.”

At the end of 1786 Cowper's dear friend William Unwin died, and the blow was followed, as in the case of his brother's death, by a return to complete insanity. This attack, though more formidable than the previous one, did not, however, last more than six months. Cowper writes to Mr. Newton :—

“From this dreadful condition of mind I emerged suddenly, so suddenly that Mrs. Unwin, having no notice of such a change herself, could give none to anybody; and when it obtained, how long it might last, or how far it was to be depended on, was a matter of the greatest uncertainty.”

After this seizure Cowper continued incessantly subject to the audible illusions which had affected him at all his worst periods. In the summer of 1792, Mrs. Unwin had a paralytic attack which left her a confirmed and hopeless invalid. The anxiety consequent on her state of health, and his unremitting attendance on her, had, naturally, the very worst effect on Cowper's spirits; and from this time his terrible delusion took more and more possession of his whole mind. He now began to communicate his experiences to Mr. Teedon, a poor schoolmaster at Olney, who believed himself the recipient of Divine revelations, and of whom Cowper had formerly spoken in terms of ridicule and contempt, but whose counsel he now sought with the greatest faith. These communications are all of the same nature, and breathe little but despair. One may serve as a sample of all :—

“DEAR SIR,—Nothing new has occurred in my experience since we saw you, one circumstance excepted, of the distressing kind. I have often told you that the notices given to you come to me unattended by any sensible effect; yet believing that they are from God, and gracious answers to your prayers, I have been accustomed to lean a little upon them, and have been the better able to sustain the constant pressure of my

burthens. But of late I have been totally deprived even of that support ; having been assured that though they are indeed from God, so far from being designed as comforts to me, to me they are reproaches, biting sarcasms, sharp strokes of irony, in short, the deadliest arrows in the quiver of the Almighty. To you indeed they are manna, and to Mrs. Unwin, because you are both at peace with God ; but to me, who have unpardonably offended Him, they are a cup of deadly wine, against which there is no antidote. So the cloudy pillar was light to Israel, but darkness and horror to Egypt."

The darkness and horror were soon almost without a break. In the summer of 1795 he removed into Norfolk under the care of his cousin, Mr. Johnson ; and at the beginning of 1796 he wrote to Lady Hesketh the following letter, so terribly expressing the "unutterable despair" which was still his feeling when, four years later, the only relief then possible to the long afflicted mind was rapidly approaching :—

TO THE LADY HESKETH, BATH.

" Jan. 22, 1796.

" I little thought ever to have addressed you by letter more. I have become daily and hourly worse ever since I left Mundsley : there I had something like a gleam of hope allowed me, that possibly my life might be granted me for a longer time than I had been used to suppose, though only on the dreadful terms of accumulating future misery on myself, and for no other reason ; but even that hope has long since forsaken me, and I now consider this letter as the warrant of my own dreadful end ; as the fulfilment of a word heard in better days, at least six-and-twenty years ago. A word which, to have understood at the time when it reached me would have been, at least might have been, a happiness indeed to me ; but my cruel destiny denied me the privilege of understanding anything that, in the terrible moment that came winged with my immediate destruction, might have served to aid me. You know my story far better

than I am able to relate it. Infinite despair is a sad prompter. I expect that in six days' time at the latest, I shall no longer foresee, but feel the accomplishment of all my fears. Oh, lot of unexampled misery incurred in a moment! Oh, wretch! to whom death and life are alike impossible! Most miserable at present in this, that being thus miserable, I have my senses continued to me, only that I may look forward to the worst. It is certain, at least, that I have them for no other purpose, and but very imperfectly even for this. My thoughts are like loose and dry sand, which, the closer it is grasped, slips the sooner away. Mr. Johnson reads to me, but I lose every other sentence through the inevitable wanderings of my mind, and experience, as I have these two years, the same shattered mode of thinking on every subject, and on all occasions. If I seem to write with more connexion, it is only because the gaps do not appear.

Adieu. I shall not be here to receive your answer, neither shall I ever see you more. Such is the expectation of the most desperate and most miserable of all beings.

“W. C.”

4.—WARM AFFECTIONS.

LADY HESKETH.

During William Cowper's residence in London he was a constant visitor at the house of his uncle, Mr. Ashley Cowper, to whose daughter Theodora he became deeply attached. His affection was returned, but the lady's father refused to sanction an engagement on the score of the near relationship of the lovers, and all intercourse between them ceased. They never met again; but Cowper, many years afterwards, said to Theodora's sister Harriet, Lady Hesketh, “I still look back to the memory of your sister, and regret her;” and there is every evidence that, on her side, the attachment remained unchanged through the whole of a long life. We trace some allusion to this disappointment

in the following letter to Lady Hesketh, written a few months before depression of spirits took the form of decided insanity:—

“THE TEMPLE, Aug. 9, 1763.

“MY DEAR COUSIN,—Having promised to write to you, I make haste to be as good as my word. I have a pleasure in writing to you at any time, but especially at the present, when my days are spent in reading the Journals, and my nights in dreaming of them. An employment not very agreeable to a head that has long been habituated to the luxury of choosing its subject, and has been as little employed upon business, as if it had grown upon the shoulders of a much wealthier gentleman. But the numskull pays for it now, and will not presently forget the discipline it has undergone lately. If I succeed in this doubtful piece of promotion, I shall have at least this satisfaction to reflect upon, that the volumes I write will be treasured up with the utmost care for ages, and will last as long as the English constitution,—a duration which ought to satisfy the vanity of any author who has a spark of love for his country. O! my good cousin! if I was to open my heart to you, I could show you strange sights; nothing, I flatter myself, that would shock you, but a great deal that would make you wonder. I am of a very singular temper, and very unlike all the men that I have ever conversed with. Certainly I am not an absolute fool; but I have more weakness than the greatest of all the fools I can recollect at present. In short, if I was as fit for the next world as I am unfit for this,—and God forbid I should speak it in vanity!—I would not change conditions with any saint in Christendom.

“My destination is settled at last, and I have obtained a furlough. Margate is the word, and what do you think will ensue, cousin? I know what you expect, but ever since I was born I have been good at disappointing the most natural

expectations. Many years ago, cousin, there was a possibility I might prove a very different thing from what I am at present. My character is now fixed and riveted fast upon me; and, between friends, is not a very splendid one, or likely to be guilty of much fascination.

"Adieu, my dear cousin! So much as I love you, I wonder how the deuce it has happened I was never in love with you. Thank Heaven that I never was, for at this time I have had a pleasure in writing to you, which in that case I should have forfeited. Let me hear from you, or I shall reap but half the reward that is due to my noble indifference.

"Yours ever, and evermore,

"W. C."

For nearly two years all intercourse with his friends ceased; but on leaving St. Alban's, Cowper thus renewed his correspondence with his cousin Harriet:—

"HUNTINGDON, *July 1, 1765.*

"MY DEAR LADY HESKETH,—Since the visit you were so kind as to pay me in the Temple (the only time I ever saw you without pleasure), what have I not suffered! And since it has pleased God to restore me to the use of my reason, what have I not enjoyed! You know, by experience, how pleasant it is to feel the first approaches of health after a fever; but, oh the fever of the brain! To feel the quenching of that fire is indeed a blessing which I think it impossible to receive without the most consummate gratitude. Terrible as this chastisement is, I acknowledge in it the hand of an infinite justice; nor is it at all more difficult for me to perceive in it the hand of an infinite mercy likewise: when I consider the effect it has had upon me, I am exceedingly thankful for it, and, without hypocrisy, esteem it the greatest blessing, next to life itself, I ever received from the divine bounty. I pray God that I may ever retain

this sense of it, and then I am sure I shall continue to be, as I am at present, really happy."

In his next letter he says:—

"What could you think of my unaccountable behaviour to you in that visit I mentioned in my last? I remember I neither spoke to you, nor looked at you. The solution of the mystery indeed followed soon after, but at the time it must have been inexplicable. The uproar within was even then begun, and my silence was only the sulkiness of a thunder-storm before it opens. I am glad, however, that the only instance in which I knew not how to value your company was when I was not in my senses. It was the first of the kind, and I trust in God it will be the last."

Though these letters breathe serenity and contentment, they are entirely devoid of that genial playfulness which was evidently a characteristic of Cowper's mind in its best seasons. A very different tone of spirits is manifest in the letter with which he hails the renewal of his correspondence with this favourite relative, after a silence of eight years' duration:—

"Oct. 12, 1785.

"MY DEAR COUSIN,—It is no new thing with you to give pleasure; but I will venture to say, that you do not often give more than you gave me this morning. When I came down to breakfast, and found upon the table a letter franked by my uncle, and when opening that frank I found that it contained a letter from you, I said within myself—'This is just as it should be. We are all grown young again, and the days, that I thought I should see no more, are actually returned.' You perceive, therefore, that you judged well when you conjectured that a line from you would not be disagreeable to me. It could not be otherwise than, as in fact it proved, a most agreeable surprise, for I can truly boast of an affection for you, that

neither years, nor interrupted intercourse, have at all abated. I need only recollect how much I valued you once, and with how much cause, immediately to feel a revival of the same value : if that can be said to revive, which at the most has only been dormant for want of employment, but I slander it when I say that it has slept. A thousand times have I recollected a thousand scenes, in which our two selves have formed the whole of the drama, with the greatest pleasure ; at times, too, when I had no reason to suppose that I should ever hear from you again. I have laughed with you at the 'Arabian Nights' Entertainment,' which afforded us, as you well know, a fund of merriment that deserves never to be forgot. I have walked with you to Netley Abbey, and have scrambled with you over hedges in every direction, and many other feats we have performed together, upon the field of my remembrance, and all within these few years. Should I say within this twelvemonth, I should not transgress the truth. The hours that I have spent with you were among the pleasantest of my former days, and are therefore chronicled in my mind so deeply, as to feel no erasure."

In another letter at this time he says :—

"I cannot believe but that I should know you, notwithstanding all that time may have done : there is not a feature of your face, could I meet it upon the road by itself, that I should not instantly recollect. I should say, that is my cousin's nose, or those are her lips and her chin, and no woman upon earth can claim them but herself. As for me, I am a very smart youth of my years ; I am not indeed grown gray, so much as I am grown bald. No matter : there was more hair in the world than ever had the honour to belong to me ; accordingly having found just enough to curl a little at my ears, and to intermix with a little of my own, that still hangs behind, I appear, if you see me in

an afternoon, to have a very decent head-dress, not easily distinguished from my natural growth, which being worn with a small bag, and a black riband about my neck, continues to me the charms of my youth, even on the verge of age. Away with the fear of writing too often !

“W. C.

“P.S.—That the view I give you of myself may be complete, I add the two following items—That I am in debt to nobody, and that I grow fat.”

The near prospect of reunion after their long separation, quickens Cowper's affection for his cousin to an almost painful intensity :—

“OLNEY, *May 15, 1786.*

“MY DEAREST COUSIN,—From this very morning I begin to date the last month of our long separation, and confidently and most comfortably hope that before the fifteenth of June shall present itself, we shall have seen each other. Is it not so ? And will it not be one of the most extraordinary eras of my extraordinary life ? A year ago, we neither corresponded, nor expected to meet in this world. But this world is a scene of marvellous events, many of them more marvellous than fiction itself would dare to hazard ; and, blessed be God ! they are not all of the distressing kind. Now and then in the course of an existence, whose hue is for the most part sable, a day turns up that makes amends for many sighs, and many subjects of complaint. Such a day shall I account the day of your arrival at Olney.

“Wherefore is it (canst thou tell me ?) that together with all those delightful sensations, to which the sight of a long absent dear friend gives birth, there is a mixture of something painful ; flutterings, and tumults, and I know not what accompaniments of our pleasure, that are in fact perfectly foreign from the occasion ? Such I feel when I think of our meeting ; and such

I suppose feel you ; and the nearer the crisis approaches, the more I am sensible of them. I know beforehand that they will increase with every turn of the wheels that shall convey me to Newport, when I shall set out to meet you ; and that when we actually meet, the pleasure, and this unaccountable pain together, will be as much as I shall be able to support. I am utterly at a loss for the cause, and can only resolve it into that appointment, by which it has been fore-ordained that all human delights shall be qualified and mingled with their contraries. For there is nothing formidable in you. To me at least there is nothing such, no, not even in your menaces, unless when you threaten me to write no more. Nay, I verily believe, did I not know you to be what you are, and had less affection for you than I have, I should have fewer of these emotions, of which I would have none, if I could help it. But a fig for them all ! Let us resolve to combat with, and to conquer them. They are dreams : they are illusions of the judgment. Some enemy that hates the happiness of human kind, and is ever industrious to dash it, works them in us ; and their being so perfectly unreasonable as they are is a proof of it. Nothing that is such can be the work of a good agent. This I know too by experience, that, like all other illusions, they exist only by force of imagination, are indebted for their prevalence to the absence of their object, and in a few moments after its appearance cease. So then this is a settled point, and the case stands thus. You will tremble as you draw near to Newport, and so shall I : but we will both recollect that there is no reason why we should, and this recollection will at least have some little effect in our favour. We will likewise both take the comfort of what we know to be true, that the tumult will soon cease, and the pleasure long survive the pain, even as long, I trust, as we ourselves shall survive it."

A few weeks later he has forgotten his fears :—

“Ah, my cousin, you begin already to fear and quake. What a hero am I, compared with you ! I have no fears of *you* ; on the contrary, am as bold as a lion. I wish that your carriage were even now at the door. You should soon see with how much courage I would face you. But what cause have you for fear ? Am I not your cousin, with whom you have wandered in the fields of Freemantle, and at Bevis’s Mount ? who used to read to you, laugh with you, till our sides have ached, at anything or nothing ? And am I in these respects at all altered ? You will not find me so ; but just as ready to laugh, and to wander, as you ever knew me. A cloud perhaps may come over me now and then, for a few hours, but from clouds I was never exempted. And are not you the identical cousin with whom I have performed all these feats ? The very Harriet whom I saw for the first time, at De Grey’s, in Norfolk Street ? (It was on a Sunday, when you came with my uncle and aunt to drink tea there, and I had dined there, and was just going back to Westminster.) If these things are so, and I am sure that you cannot gainsay a syllable of them all, then this consequence follows ; that I do not promise myself more pleasure from your company than I shall be sure to find. Then you are my cousin, in whom I always delighted and in whom I doubt not that I shall delight even to my latest hour. But this wicked coachmaker has sunk my spirits. What a miserable thing it is to depend, in any degree, for the accomplishment of a wish, and that wish so fervent, on the punctuality of a creature who I suppose was never punctual in his life ! Do tell him, my dear, in order to quicken him, that if he performs his promise, he shall make my coach when I want one ; but that if he performs it not, I will most assuredly employ some other man.”

His former anticipations of being overcome by this meeting with his cousin, proved more correct than his bolder expressions. Writing of Lady Hesketh's arrival, he says:—

“Her first appearance was too much for me ; my spirits, instead of being greatly raised, as I had inadvertently supposed they would be, broke down with me under the pressure of too much joy, and left me flat, or rather melancholy, throughout the day, to a degree that was mortifying to myself, and alarming to her. But I have made amends for this failure since, and in point of cheerfulness have far exceeded her expectations, for she knew that sable had been my suit for many years.”

After this re-union the correspondence between the cousins becomes still more frequent and more affectionate. How necessary Lady Hesketh's letters were to Cowper's comfort, is shown by the following complaint of a fortnight's silence:—

“THE LODGE, Jan. 30, 1788.

MY DEAREST COUSIN,—It is a fortnight since I heard from you,—that is to say, a week longer than you have accustomed me to wait for a letter. I do not forget that you have recommended it to me, on occasions somewhat similar, to banish all anxiety, and to ascribe your silence only to the interruptions of company. Good advice, my dear, but not easily taken by a man circumstanced as I am. I have learned in the school of adversity, a school from which I have no expectation that I shall ever be dismissed, to apprehend the worst, and have ever found it the only course in which I can indulge myself without the least danger of incurring a disappointment. This kind of experience, continued through many years, has given me such an habitual bias to the gloomy side of everything, that I never have a moment's ease on any subject to which I am not indifferent. How then can I be easy, when I am left afloat upon a sea of endless conjectures, of which you furnish the occasion? Write,

I beseech you, and do not forget that I am now a battered actor upon this turbulent stage ; that what little vigour of mind I ever had—of the self-supporting kind, I mean—has long since been broken ; and that though I can bear nothing well, yet any thing better than a state of ignorance concerning your welfare. I have spent hours in the night leaning upon my elbow and wondering what your silence means. I entreat you once more to put an end to these speculations, which cost me more animal spirits than I can spare ; if you cannot without great trouble to yourself, which in your situation may very possibly be the case, contrive opportunities of writing so frequently as usual, only say it, and I am content. I will wait, if you desire it, as long for every letter,—but then let them arrive at the period once fixed, exactly at the time, for my patience will not hold out an hour beyond it.”

5. THE UNWINS.

Cowper writes from Huntingdon to his old friend Joseph Hill :—

“I have added another family to the number of those I was acquainted with when you were here. Their name is Unwin—the most agreeable people imaginable ; quite sociable, and as free from the ceremonious civility of country gentlefolks as any I ever met with. They treat me more like a near relation than a stranger, and their house is always open to me. The old gentleman carries me to Cambridge in his chaise. He is a man of learning and good sense, and as simple as parson Adams. His wife has a very uncommon understanding, has read much to excellent purpose, and is more polite than a duchess. The son, who belongs to Cambridge, is a most amiable young man, and the daughter quite of a piece with the rest of the family. They see but little company, which suits me exactly ; go when I will, I find a house full of peace and cordiality in all its parts,

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and I am sure to hear no scandal, but such discourse instead of it as we are all better for. You remember Rousseau's description of an English morning; such are the mornings I spent with these good people; and the evenings differ from them in nothing, except that they are still more snug, and quieter. Now I know them, I wonder that I liked Huntingdon so well before I knew them, and am apt to think I should find every place disagreeable that had not an Unwin belonging to it.

"This incident convinces me of the truth of an observation I have often made, that when we circumscribe our estimate of all that is clever within the limits of our own acquaintance (which I at least have been always apt to do), we are guilty of a very uncharitable censure upon the rest of the world, and of a narrowness of thinking disgraceful to ourselves. Wapping and Redriff may contain some of the most amiable persons living, and such as one would go to Wapping and Redriff to make acquaintance with. You remember Mr. Gray's Stanza—

' Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.'

" Yours, dear Joe,
" W. C."

After taking up his abode with this family, Cowper writes:—

"Mrs. Unwin has almost a maternal affection for me, and I have something very like a filial one for her, and her son and I are brothers."

His letters to William Unwin are more easy in style, and more free from morbid sentiments than those to any other of his familiar correspondents; and we feel no doubt that during the life of this cheerful and sensible friend, a most beneficial influence was exercised over Cowper's mind, which so greatly needed a sound prop to lean on.

Two letters written to Mr. Unwin, when on a visit to the sea-side, are good samples of Cowper's lightest style:—

“ July —, '79.

“ MY DEAR FRIEND,—If you please, you may give my service to Mr. James Martin, glazier, and tell him that I have furnished myself with glass from Bedford, for half the money.

When I was at Margate, it was an excursion of pleasure to go to see Ramsgate. The pier, I remember, was accounted a most excellent piece of stone-work, and such I found it. By this time, I suppose it is finished; and surely it is no small advantage, that you have an opportunity of observing how nicely those great stones are put together, as often as you please, without either trouble or expense. But you think Margate more lively. So is a Cheshire cheese full of mites more lively than a sound one; but that very liveliness only proves its rottenness. I remember, too, that Margate, though full of company, was generally filled with such company as people who were nice in the choice of their company were rather fearful of keeping company with. The hoy went to London every week, loaded with mackerel and herrings, and returned loaded with company. The cheapness of the conveyance made it equally commodious for Dead fish and Lively company. So, perhaps, your solitude at Ramsgate may turn out another advantage; at least I should think it one.

“ There was not, at that time, much to be seen in the Isle of Thanet, besides the beauty of the country, and the fine prospects of the sea, which are nowhere surpassed except in the Isle of Wight, or upon some parts of the coast of Hampshire. One sight, however, I remember, engaged my curiosity, and I went to see it:—a fine piece of ruins, built by the late Lord Holland, at a great expense, which, the day after I saw it, tumbled down for nothing. Perhaps, therefore, it is still a ruin: and if it is, I would advise you by all means to visit

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it, as it must have been much improved by this fortunate incident. It is hardly possible to put stones together with that air of wild and magnificent disorder which they are sure to acquire by falling of their own accord.

"We heartily wish that Mrs. Unwin may receive the utmost benefit of bathing. At the same time we caution *you* against the use of it, however the heat of the weather may seem to recommend it. It is not safe for thin habits, hectically inclined.

"I remember—(the fourth and last thing I mean to remember upon this occasion)—that Sam Cox, the counsel, walking by the sea-side as if absorbed in deep contemplation, was questioned about what he was musing on. He replied, 'I was wondering that such an almost infinite and unwieldy element should produce a *sprat*.'

"Our love attends your whole party.

"Yours affectionately,

"W. C.

"P.S. You are desired to purchase three pounds of sixpenny white worsted, at a shop well recommended for that commodity. The Isle of Thanet is famous for it, beyond any other place in the kingdom."

"July 17, 1779.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—We envy you your sea-breezes. In the garden we feel nothing but the reflexion of the heat from the walls; and in the parlour, from the opposite houses. I fancy Virgil was so situated when he wrote those two beautiful lines :—

———*Ob quis me gelidis in vallibus Hæmi
Sistat, et ingenti ramorum protegat umbrâ!*

The worst of it is, that though the sun-beams strike as forcibly upon my harp-strings as they did upon his, they elicit no such

sounds, but rather produce such groans as they are said to have drawn from those of the statue of Memnon.

“As you have ventured to make the experiment, your own experience will be your best guide in the article of bathing. An inference will hardly follow, though one should pull at it with all one’s might, from Smollett’s case to yours. He was corpulent, muscular, and strong; whereas, if you were either stolen or strayed, such a description of you in an advertisement would hardly direct an enquirer with sufficient accuracy and exactness. But if bathing does not make your head ache, or prevent your sleeping at night, I should imagine it could not hurt you.

“I remember taking a walk upon the strand at Margate, where the cliff is high and perpendicular. At long intervals there are cartways cut through the rock down to the beach, and there is no other way of access to it, or of return from it. I walked near a mile upon the water-edge, without observing that the tide was rising fast upon me. When I *did* observe it, it was almost too late. I ran every step back again, and had much ado to save my distance. I mention this as a caution, lest you should happen at any time to be surprised as I was. It would be very unpleasant to be forced to cling, like a cat, to the side of a precipice, and perhaps hardly possible to do it, for four hours without any respite.

“It seems a trifle, but it is a real disadvantage to have no better name to pass by than the gentleman you mention. Whether we suppose him settled and promoted in the army, the church, or the law, how uncouth the sound — Captain Twopenny! Bishop Twopenny! Judge Twopenny! The abilities of Lord Mansfield would hardly impart a dignity to such a name. Should he perform deeds worthy of poetical panegyric, how difficult would it be to ennoble the sound of Twopenny!—

*Muse! place him high upon the lists of Fame,
The wondrous man, and Twopenny his name!*

But, to be serious, if the French should land in the Isle of Thanet, and Mr. Twopenny should fall into their hands, he will have a fair opportunity to frenchify his name, and may call himself Monsieur Deux Sous; which, when he comes to be exchanged by cartel, will easily resume an English form, and slide naturally into Two Shoes, in my mind a considerable improvement."

Although an attack of Cowper's terrible malady followed closely upon Unwin's death, he could, at the time, write with perfect composure of that sad event:—

"I sent you, my dear, a melancholy letter, and I do not know that I shall now send you one very unlike it. Not that anything occurs in consequence of our late loss more afflictive than was to be expected, but the mind does not perfectly recover its tone after a shock like that which has been felt so lately. This I observe, that though my experience has long since taught me, that this world is a world of shadows, and that it is the more prudent as well as the more Christian course to possess the comforts that we find in it, as if we possessed them not, it is no easy matter to reduce this doctrine into practice. We forget that that God who gave them, may, when He pleases, take them away; and that perhaps it may please Him to take them at a time when we least expect, or are least disposed to part from them. Thus it has happened in the present case. There never was a moment in Unwin's life, when there seemed to be more urgent want of him than the moment in which he died. He had attained to an age when, if they are at any time useful, men become useful to their families, their friends, and the world. His parish began to feel, and to be sensible of the advantages of his ministry. The

clergy around him were many of them awed by his example. His children were thriving under his own tuition and management, and his eldest boy is likely to feel his loss severely, being by his years in some respect qualified to understand the value of such a parent; by his literary proficiency too clever for a schoolboy, and too young at the same time for the university. The removal of a man in the prime of life of such a character, and with such connexions, seems to make a void in society that can never be filled. God seemed to have made him just what he was, that he might be a blessing to others, and when the influence of his character and abilities began to be felt, removed him. These are mysteries, my dear, that we cannot contemplate without astonishment, but which will nevertheless be explained hereafter, and must in the mean time be revered in silence. It is well for his mother that she has spent her life in the practice of an habitual acquiescence in the dispensations of Providence, else I know that this stroke would have been heavier, after all that she has suffered upon another account, than she could have borne. She derives, as she well may, great consolation from the thought that he lived the life, and died the death of a Christian. The consequence is, if possible, more unavoidable than the most mathematical conclusion, that therefore he is happy. So farewell, my friend Unwin! The first man for whom I conceived a friendship after my removal from St. Alban's, and for whom I cannot but still continue to feel a friendship, though I shall see thee with these eyes no more."

Their mutual loss probably drew still closer the attachment between Cowper and the bereaved mother, whose adopted son he called himself. This attachment assumed a yet more filial character, when the formerly active woman became a helpless paralytic. Of Mrs. Unwin's first seizure Cowper thus writes to a friend:—

"On Saturday last, while I was at my desk near the window,

and Mrs. Unwin at the fireside, opposite to it, I heard her suddenly exclaim, 'Oh! Mr. Cowper, don't let me fall!' I turned, and saw her actually falling, together with her chair, and started to her side just in time to prevent her. She was seized with a violent giddiness, which lasted, though with some abatement, the whole day, and was attended too with some other very alarming symptoms. At present, however, she is relieved from the vertigo, and seems in all respects better.

"She has been my faithful and affectionate nurse for many years, and consequently has a claim on all my attentions. She has them, and will have them as long as she wants them; which will probably be, at the best, a considerable time to come. I feel the shock, as you may suppose, in every nerve. God grant that there may be no repetition of it! Another such a stroke upon her would, I think, upset me completely; but at present I hold up bravely."

Of a second attack he writes to Lady Hesketh:—

"I wish with all my heart, my dearest coz, that I had not ill news for the subject of the present letter. My friend, my Mary, has again been attacked by the same disorder that threatened me last year with the loss of her, and of which you were yourself a witness. Gregson would not allow that first stroke to be paralytic, but this he acknowledges to be so; and with respect to the former, I never had myself any doubt that it was; but this has been much the severest. Her speech has been almost unintelligible from the moment that she was struck: it is with difficulty that she opens her eyes, and she cannot keep them open, the muscles necessary to the purpose being contracted; and as to self-moving powers, from place to place, and the use of her right hand and arm, she has entirely lost them.

"It has happened well, that of all men living the man most

qualified to assist and comfort me is here, though till within these few days I never saw him, and a few weeks since had no expectation that I ever should. You have already guessed that I mean Hayley. Hayley who loves me as if he had known me from my cradle. When he returns to town, as he must, alas ! too soon, he will pay his respects to you."

Before becoming personally acquainted with William Hayley, Cowper had written to him :

" God grant that this friendship of ours may be a comfort to us all the rest of our days, in a world where true friendships are rarities, and especially when suddenly formed they are apt soon to terminate ! But, as I said before, I feel a disposition of heart toward you that I never felt for one whom I had never seen ; and that shall prove itself, I trust, in the event a propitious omen."

These hopes were fully realized. The following letters to Hayley after his visit to Weston, show how this "beloved brother," as Cowper calls him, had endeared himself to the affectionate poet, and his invalid companion :—

" WESTON, *June 4, 1792.*

" All's well.

" Which words I place as conspicuously as possible, and prefix them to my letter, to save you the pain, my friend and brother, of a moment's anxious speculation. Poor Mary proceeds in her amendment still, and improves, I think, even at a swifter rate than when you left her. The stronger she grows, the faster she gathers strength, which is perhaps the natural course of recovery. She walked so well this morning, that she told me at my first visit she had entirely forgot her illness ; and she spoke so distinctly, and had so much of her usual countenance, that, had it been possible, she would have made me forget it too.

“Returned from my walk; blown to tatters—found two dear things in the study, your letter, and my Mary! She is bravely well, and your beloved epistle does us both good. I found your kind pencil note in my song-book, as soon as I came down on the morning of your departure; and Mary was vexed to the heart, that the simpletons who watched her supposed her asleep, when she was not; for she learned soon after you were gone, that you would have peeped at her, had you known her to have been awake. I perhaps might have had a peep too, and therefore was as vexed as she; but, if it please God, we shall make ourselves large amends for all lost peeps by and by at Earsham.”

Three days later :—

“Of what materials can you suppose me made, if after all the rapid proofs that you have given me of your friendship, I do not love you with all my heart, and regret your absence continually? But you must permit me nevertheless to be melancholy now and then; or if you will not, I must be so without your permission: for that sable thread is so intermixed with the very thread of my existence, as to be inseparable from it, at least while I exist in the body. Be content therefore; let me sigh and groan, but always be sure that I love you! You will be well assured that I should not have indulged myself in this rhapsody about myself and my melancholy, had my present mood been of that complexion, or had not our poor Mary seemed still to advance in her recovery. So in fact she does, and has performed several little feats to-day; such as either she could not perform at all, or very feebly, while you were with us.

“I shall be glad if you have seen Johnny, as I call him, my Norfolk cousin; he is a sweet lad, but as shy as a bird. It costs him always two or three days to open his mouth before

a stranger ; but when he does, he is sure to please by the innocent cheerfulness of his conversation. His sister too is one of my idols, for the resemblance she bears to my mother.

“ Mary and you have all my thoughts ; and how should it be otherwise ? She looks well, is better, and loves you dearly.

“ Adieu ! my brother,

“ W. C.”

Cowper's feelings towards Mrs. Unwin at this time are touchingly expressed in these verses :—

“ The twentieth year is well-nigh past
Since first our sky was overcast ;
Ah ! would that this might be the last !
My Mary !

“ Thy spirits have a fainter flow,
I see thee daily weaker grow ;
’Twas my distress that brought thee low,
My Mary !

“ Thy needles, once a shining store,
For my sake restless heretofore,
Now rust disused, and shine no more ;
My Mary !

“ For though thou gladly wouldst fulfil
The same kind office for me still,
Thy sight now seconds not thy will,
My Mary !

“ But well thou play’dst the housewife’s part ;
And all thy threads, with magic art,
Have wound themselves about this heart !
My Mary !

“ Thy indistinct expressions seem
Like language utter’d in a dream ;
Yet me they charm whate’er the theme,
My Mary !

“ Thy silver locks, once auburn bright,
Are still more lovely in my sight
Than golden beams of orient light,
My Mary !

“ For could I view nor them nor thee,
What sight worth seeing could I see !
The sun would rise in vain for me,
My Mary !

“ Partakers of thy sad decline,
Thy hands their little force resign ;
Yet gently prest, press gently mine,
My Mary !

“ Such feebleness of limbs thou prov’st,
That now at every step thou mov’st
Upheld by two ;—yet still thou lov’st,
My Mary !

“ And still to love, though prest with ill,
In wintry age to feel no chill,
With me is to be lovely still,
My Mary !

“ But ah ! by constant heed I know,
How oft the sadness that I show,
Transforms thy smiles to looks of woe,
My Mary !

“ And should my future lot be cast
With much resemblance of the past,
Thy worn-out heart will break at last
My Mary !”

6.—LADY AUSTEN.

In Cowper’s intercourse with Lady Austen we see the only one of his friendships which was not entirely free from that touch of the ridiculous so often found in an enthusiastic attachment between persons no longer young, who are bound by no ties beyond those of

affection. This lady is thus introduced by Cowper in a letter to Mr. Unwin:—

“ I had the relation from Lady Austen, sister to Mrs. Jones, wife of the minister at Clifton. She is a most agreeable woman, and has fallen in love with your mother and me ; in-somuch that I do not know but she may settle at Olney. Yesterday se’nnight we all dined together in the *Spinnie*—a most delightful retirement, belonging to Mrs. Throckmorton, of Weston. Lady Austen’s lackey, and a lad that waits on me in the garden, drove a wheelbarrow full of eatables and drinkables to the scene of our *fête champêtre*. A board laid over the top of the wheelbarrow served us for a table ; our dining-room was a root-house lined with moss and ivy. At six o’clock the servants, who had dined under a great elm upon the ground, at a little distance, boiled the kettle, and the said wheelbarrow served us for a tea-table. We then took a walk into the wilderness, about half a mile off, and were at home again a little after eight, having spent the day together from noon till evening without one cross occurrence, or the least weariness of each other. A happiness few parties of pleasure can boast of.”

A plan was soon formed for this new acquaintance to become a near neighbour:—

“ Here is a new scene opening,” Cowper writes to Mr. Newton, “ which, whether it perform what it promises or not, will add fresh plumes to the wings of time ; at least while it continues to be a subject of contemplation. If the project take effect, a thousand varieties will attend the change it will make in our situation at Olney. If not, it will serve, however, to speculate and converse upon, and steal away many hours, by engaging our attention, before it be entirely dropped. Lady Austen, very desirous of retirement, especially of a retirement

near her sister, an admirer of Mr. Scott as a preacher, and of your two humble servants now in the greenhouse, as the most agreeable creatures in the world, is at present determined to settle here. That part of our great building which is at present occupied by Dick Coleman, his wife, child, and a thousand rats, is the corner of the world she chooses, above all others, as the place of her future residence. Next spring twelvemonth she begins to repair and beautify, and the following winter (by which time the lease of her house in town will determine) she intends to take possession. I am highly pleased with the plan, upon Mrs. Unwin's account, who, since Mrs. Newton's departure, is destitute of all female connexion, and has not, in any emergency, a woman to speak to. Mrs. Scott is indeed in the neighbourhood, and an excellent person, but always engaged by a close attention to her family, and no more than ourselves a lover of visiting. But these things are all at present in the clouds. Two years must intervene—and in two years not only this project, but all the projects in Europe, may be disconcerted."

The project was never carried out in its entirety, and it had a narrow escape of being totally disconcerted very soon after it was formed. In the autumn Lady Austen returned to London, and there Cowper addressed to her an affectionate poetical epistle, which thus concludes:—

" Say, Anna, had you never known
The beauties of a rose full-blown,
Could you, though luminous your eye,
By looking on the bud, descry,
Or guess, with a prophetic power,
The future splendour of the flower?
Just so, the Omnipotent, who turns
The system of a world's concerns,
From mere minutiae can educe
Events of most important use,

And bid a dawning sky display
The blaze of a meridian day.
The works of man tend, one and all,
As needs they must, from great to small;
And vanity absorbs at length
The monuments of human strength.
But who can tell how vast the plan,
Which this day's incident began?
Too small, perhaps, the slight occasion
For our dim-sighted observation;
It pass'd unnoticed, as the bird
That cleaves the yielding air unheard;
And yet may prove, when understood,
An harbinger of endless good.

“ Not that I deem, or mean to call,
Friendship a blessing, cheap or small;
But merely to remark, that ours,
Like some of nature's sweetest flowers,
Rose from a seed of tiny size,
That seem'd to promise no such prize :
A transient visit intervening,
And made almost without a meaning,
(Hardly the effect of inclination,
Much less of pleasing expectation,)
Produc'd a friendship, then begun,
That has cemented us in one;
And placed it in our power to prove,
By long fidelity and love,
That Solomon has wisely spoken;
' A threefold cord is not soon broken.' ”

The Wise Man could not have used the expression “*three-fold cord*” in the sense in which Cowper, with a poet's license, has applied it here; indeed, the context in the book of Ecclesiastes shows that it was not so used, and this history of the poet's intercourse with his “*Mary*” and “*Anna*” is one of the many proofs we meet with of the extremely brittle nature of a three-fold friendship. On this occasion, only a few weeks after Cowper had poured out of his affectionate

heart this assurance of "long fidelity and love," he thus writes to William Unwin:—

"I have a piece of secret history to communicate which I would have imparted sooner, but that I thought it possible there might be no occasion to mention it at all. When persons for whom I have felt a friendship, disappoint and mortify me by their conduct, or act unjustly towards me, though I no longer esteem them friends, I still feel that tenderness for their character that I would conceal the blemish if I could. But in making known the following anecdote to you, I run no risk of a publication, assured that when I have once enjoined you secrecy you will observe it.

"My letters have already apprized you of that close and intimate connexion that took place between the lady you visited in Queen Anne Street, and us. Nothing could be more promising, though sudden in the commencement. She treated us with as much unreservedness of communication, as if we had been born in the same house, and educated together. At her departure, she herself proposed a correspondence, and because writing does not agree with your mother, proposed a correspondence with me. This sort of intercourse had not been long maintained, before I discovered, by some slight intimations of it, that she had conceived displeasure at somewhat I had written, though I cannot now recollect it: conscious of none but the most upright inoffensive intentions, I yet apologized for the passage in question, and the flaw was healed again. Our correspondence after this proceeded smoothly for a considerable time, but at length having had repeated occasion to observe that she expressed a sort of romantic idea of our merits, and built such expectations of felicity upon our friendship, as we were sure that nothing human could possibly answer, I wrote to remind her that we were mortal, to recommend it to her not to think more highly of us than the subject

would warrant, and intimating that when we embellish a creature with colours taken from our own fancy, and so adorned, admire and praise it beyond its real merits, we make it an idol, and have nothing to expect in the end, but that it will deceive our hopes, and that we shall derive nothing from it but a painful conviction of our error. Your mother heard me read the letter, she read it herself, and honoured it with her warm approbation. But it gave mortal offence; it received indeed an answer, but such an one as I could by no means reply to; and there ended (for it was impossible it should ever be renewed) a friendship that bid fair to be lasting; being formed with a woman whose seeming stability of temper, whose knowledge of the world, and great experience of its folly, but above all, whose sense of religion, and seriousness of mind (for with all that gaiety, she is a great thinker), induced us both, in spite of that cautious reserve that marks our characters, to trust her, to love and value her, and to open our hearts for her reception. It may be necessary to add, that by her own desire I wrote to her under the assumed relation of a brother, and she to me as my sister.—*Ceu fumus in auras.*"

Before long the lady held out an olive-branch, in the shape of "three pair of worked ruffles," which Cowper returned by the promise of a volume of his poems. But he very sensibly remarks to his friend,—

"Whether anything in the shape of a reconciliation is to take place hereafter, I know not; but this I know, that when an amiable freedom of intercourse, and that unreserved confidence which belongs only to true friendship, has been once unrooted, plant it again with what care you may, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to make it grow. The fear of giving offence to a temper too apt to take it, is unfavourable to that comfort we propose to ourselves even in our ordinary connexions, but absolutely incompatible with the pleasures of real friendship."

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It was not long, however, before Cowper announced :—

“We are reconciled. She seized the first opportunity to embrace your mother with tears of the tenderest affection, and I of course am satisfied. We were all a little awkward at first, but now are as easy as ever. She stays at Clifton till after Christmas.”

The rupture of the “three-fold cord” is now to all appearance effectually repaired, and the trio are once more “cemented in one.”

“Lady Austen’s behaviour to us ever since her return to Clifton has been such as to engage our affections to her more than ever.”

In another letter :—

“We are as happy in Lady Austen, and she in us, as ever ; having a lively imagination, and being passionately desirous of consolidating all into one family (for she has taken her leave of London), she has just sprung a project which serves at least to amuse us, and to make us laugh ; it is, to hire Mr. Small’s house, on the top of Clifton Hill, which is large, commodious, and handsome, will hold us conveniently, and any friends who may occasionally favour us with a visit. The house is furnished ; but, if it can be hired without the furniture, will let for a trifle.”

In the next letter to Unwin, Cowper says :—

“Our proposed removal to Mr. Small’s was, as you suppose, a jest, or rather a joco-serious matter. We never looked upon it as entirely feasible, yet we saw in it something so like practicability, that we did not esteem it altogether unworthy of our attention. It was one of those projects which people of lively imaginations play with, and admire for a few days, and then break in pieces. Lady Austen returned on Thursday from

London, where she spent the last fortnight, and whither she was called by an unexpected opportunity to dispose of the remainder of her lease. She has now, therefore, no longer any connexion with the great city, she has none on earth that she calls friends but us, and no house but at Olney."

To this friend and adopted sister he writes at this time:—

"To watch the storms, and hear the sky
Give all our almanacks the lie;
To shake with cold, and see the plains
In Autumn drown'd with wintry rains;
'Tis thus I spend my moments here,
And wish myself a Dutch Mynheer;
I then should have no need of wit,
For lumpish Hollander unfit.
Nor should I then repine at mud,
Or meadows deluged with a flood;
But in a bog live well content,
And find it just my element;
Should be a clod, and not a man,
Nor wish in vain for Sister Aun,
With charitable aid to drag
My mind out of its proper quag;
Should have the genius of a boor,
And no ambition to have more.

"MY DEAR SISTER,—You see my beginning. I do not know but in time I may proceed even to the printing of halfpenny ballads. Excuse the coarseness of my paper; I wasted such a quantity before I could accomplish anything legible, that I could not afford finer. I intend to employ an ingenious mechanic of the town to make me a longer case; for you may observe that my lines turn up their tails like Dutch mastiffs, so difficult do I find it to make the two halves exactly coincide with each other.

"We wait with impatience for the departure of this unreasonable flood. We think of you, and talk of you, but we can do no more, till the waters shall subside. I do not think our correspondence should drop because we are within a mile of each other. It is but an imaginary approximation, the flood having in reality as effectually parted us as if the British Channel rolled between us.

"Yours, my dear sister, with Mrs. Unwin's best love.

"W. C."

"Aug. 12, 1782."

Nearly a year and a half later the harmony is still untroubled:—

"Lady Austen and we pass our days alternately at each other's *château*. In the morning I walk with one or other of the ladies, and in the afternoon wind thread. Thus did Hercules, and thus probably did Samson, and thus do I; and were both those heroes living, I should not fear to challenge them to a trial of skill in that business, or doubt to beat them both. As to killing lions, and other amusements of that kind, with which they were so delighted, I should be their humble servant, and beg to be excused."

But in the course of eighteen months more the cord is again broken, never to be re-united. In July, 1784, Cowper writes to Unwin:—

"You are going to Bristol. A lady, not long since our very near neighbour, is probably there: she *was* there very lately. If you should chance to fall into her company, remember, if you please, that we found the connexion on some accounts an inconvenient one, that we do not wish to renew it, and conduct yourself accordingly. A character with which we spend all our time should be made on purpose for us; too much or too little of any single ingredient spoils all: in the instance in question,

the dissimilitude was too great not to be felt continually, and consequently made our intercourse unpleasant. We have reason, however, to believe that she has given up all thoughts of a return to Olney."

At the beginning of 1786 Cowper writes to his cousin:—

"All intercourse has ceased between us and Lady Austen almost these two years. This mystery shall also be accounted for when you come. She has left Bristol, and is at present settled within a mile of us with her sister. You are candid, and will give me credit when I say that the fault is not with us."

The mystery which was to be explained to Lady Hesketh, is still a mystery to us, excepting in so far as the former quarrel throws some light upon it. In a previous letter to his cousin, Cowper describes how the constant attention exacted by his fair neighbour interfered with his literary pursuits:—

"She had been used to a great deal of company, and we, fearing that she would find such a transition into silent retirement irksome, contrived to give her our agreeable company often. Becoming continually more and more intimate, a practice obtained at length of our dining with each other alternately every day, Sundays excepted. In order to facilitate our communication, we made doors in the two garden-walls abovesaid, by which means we considerably shortened the way from one house to the other, and could meet when we pleased without entering the town at all, a measure the rather expedient, because in winter the town is abominably dirty, and she kept no carriage. On her first settlement in our neighbourhood, I made it my particular business (for at that time I was not employed in writing, having published my first volume, and not begun my second), to pay my devoirs to her ladyship every

morning at eleven. Customs very soon become laws. I began the 'Task,'—for she was the lady who gave me the Sofa for a subject. Being once engaged in the work, I began to feel the inconvenience of my morning attendance. We had seldom breakfasted ourselves till ten, and the intervening hour was all the time that I could find in the whole day for writing; and occasionally it would happen that the half of that hour was all that I could secure for the purpose. But there was no remedy: long usage had made that which at first was optional, a point of good manners, and consequently of necessity, and I was forced to neglect the Task to attend upon the Muse who had inspired the subject."

Probably the poet had been too long used to devoted service from all around him not to chafe at having to yield this constant homage to another, although his chivalry may have forbidden him to withhold it. We are, perhaps, not far wrong in concluding, with village gossips of a liberal turn of mind, that "there were faults on both sides."

LETTERS FROM COWPER ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

7.—TO THE REV. WILLIAM UNWIN.

ON THE SOCIAL INSTINCTS OF MANKIND.

“ Nov. 26, 1781.

“ MY DEAR FRIEND,—I wrote to you by the last post, supposing you at Stock ; but lest that letter should not follow you to Laytonstone, and you should suspect me of unreasonable delay, and lest the frank you have sent me should degenerate into waste paper, and perish upon my hands, I write again. The former letter, however, containing all my present stock of intelligence, it is more than possible that this may prove a blank, or but little worthy of your acceptance. You will do me the justice to suppose, that if I could be very entertaining, I would be so, because, by giving me credit for such a willingness to please, you only allow me a share of that universal vanity, which inclines every man, upon all occasions, to exhibit himself to the best advantage. To say the truth, however, when I write, as I do to you, not about business, nor on any subject that approaches to that description, I mean much less my correspondent's amusement, which my modesty will not always permit me to hope for, than my own. There is a pleasure annexed to the communication of one's ideas, whether by word of mouth, or by letter, which nothing earthly can supply the place of, and it is the delight we find in this mutual intercourse, that not only proves us to be creatures intended for social life, but more than anything else perhaps fits us for it.—

I have no patience with philosophers ; they, one and all, suppose (at least I understand it to be a prevailing opinion among them) that man's weakness, his necessities, his inability to stand alone, have furnished the prevailing motive, under the influence of which he renounced at first a life of solitude, and became a gregarious creature. It seems to me more reasonable, as well as more honourable to my species, to suppose that generosity of soul and a brotherly attachment to our own kind, drew us, as it were, to one common centre, taught us to build cities, and inhabit them, and welcome every stranger that would cast in his lot amongst us, that we might enjoy fellowship with each other, and the luxury of reciprocal endearments, without which a paradise could afford no comfort. There are, indeed, all sorts of characters in the world ; there are some whose understandings are so sluggish, and whose hearts are such mere clods, that they live in society without either contributing to the sweets of it, or having any relish for them. A man of this stamp passes by our window continually ; he draws patterns for the lacemakers ; I never saw him conversing with a neighbour but once in my life, though I have known him by sight these twelve years ; he is of a very sturdy make, has a round belly, extremely protuberant, which he evidently considers as his best friend, because it is his only companion, and it is the labour of his life to fill it. I can easily conceive, that it is merely the love of good eating and drinking, and now and then the want of a new pair of shoes, that attaches this man so much to the neighbourhood of his fellow-mortals ; for suppose these exigencies, and others of a like kind, to subsist no longer, and what is there that could possibly give society the preference in his esteem ? He might strut about with his two thumbs upon his hips in a wilderness ; he could hardly be more silent than he is at Olney, and for any advantage, or comfort, or friendship, or brotherly affection, he could not be more destitute of such

blessings there, than in his present situation. But other men have something more than guts to satisfy ; there are the yearnings of the heart, which, let philosophers say what they will, are more importunate than all the necessities of the body, that will not suffer a creature, worthy to be called human, to be content with an insulated life, or to look for his friends among the beasts of the forest. Yourself for instance ! It is not because there are no tailors or pastry-cooks to be found upon Salisbury Plain, that you do not choose it for your abode, but because you are a philanthropist,—because you are susceptible of social impressions, and have a pleasure in doing a kindness when you can. Witness the salmon you sent, and the salmon you still mean to send ; to which your mother wishes you to add a handful of prawns, not only because she likes them, but because they agree with her so well that she even finds them medicinal.

“ Now upon the word of a poor creature, I have said all that I have said, without the least intention to say one word of it when I began. But thus it is with my thoughts :—when you shake a crab-tree, the fruit falls ; good for nothing indeed when you have got it, but still the best that is to be expected from a crab-tree. You are welcome to them, such as they are, and if you approve my sentiments, tell the philosophers of the day that I have outshot them all, and have discovered the true origin of society, when I least looked for it.

“ We should be glad to receive this fresh proof of your regard, viz., the additional piece of salmon, at any time before Christmas.”

ON THE DESIRE FOR LITERARY FAME.

“ June 12, 1782.

✍ “ MY DEAR FRIEND,—Every extraordinary occurrence in our lives affords us an opportunity to learn, if we will, something

more of our own hearts and tempers than we were before aware of. It is easy to promise ourselves beforehand, that our conduct shall be wise, or moderate, or resolute, on any given occasion. But when that occasion occurs, we do not always find it easy to make good the promise : such a difference there is between theory and practice. Perhaps this is no new remark ; but it is not a whit the worse for being old, if it be true.

“ Before I had published I said to myself—You and I, Mr. Cowper, will not concern ourselves much about what the critics may say of our book. But having once set my wits for a venture, I soon became anxious about the issue, and found that I could not be satisfied with a warm place in my own good graces, unless my friends were pleased with me as much as I pleased myself. Meeting with their approbation, I began to feel the workings of ambition. It is well, said I, that my friends are pleased, but friends are sometimes partial, and mine, I have reason to think, are not altogether free from bias : methinks I should like to hear a stranger or two speak well of me. I was presently gratified by the approbation of the ‘London Magazine’ and the ‘Gentleman’s,’ particularly by that of the former, and by the plaudit of Dr. Franklin. By the way, magazines are publications which we have but little respect for, till we ourselves are chronicled in them, and then they assume an importance in our esteem which before we could not allow them. But the ‘Monthly Review,’ the most formidable of all my judges, is still behind. What will that critical Rhadamanthus say, when my shivering genius shall appear before him? Still he keeps me in hot water, and I must wait another month for his award. Alas ! when I wish for a favourable sentence from that quarter (to confess a weakness that I should not confess to all), I feel myself not a little influenced by a tender regard to my reputation here, even among my neighbours at Olney. Here are watchmakers, who themselves

are wits; and who at present perhaps think me one. Here is a carpenter, and a baker, and not to mention others, here is your idol, Mr. Teedon, whose smile is fame. All these read the 'Monthly Review,' and all these will set me down for a dunce, if those terrible critics show them the example. But oh! wherever else I am accounted dull, dear Mr. Griffith, let me pass for a genius at Olney!"

ON FACE-PAINTING.

Cowper's remarks on this subject may not be inappropriate at a time when Fashion's ever-revolving wheel has again brought her obedient lieges to the custom of besmearing their faces with paint and powder,—not only producing a hard, artificial surface, in the place of nature's perfect colouring, but, what is far worse, giving an appearance of bold self-consciousness, where there may be no *real* lack of the true feminine grace of modesty.

“ May 3, 1784.

“MY DEAR FRIEND.—The subject of face-painting may be considered (I think) in two points of view. First, there is room for dispute with respect to the consistency of the practice with good morals; and secondly, whether it be on the whole convenient or not, may be a matter worthy of agitation. I set out with all the formality of logical disquisition, but do not promise to observe the same regularity any further than it may comport with my purpose of writing as fast as I can.

“As to the immorality of the custom, were I in France, I should see none. On the contrary, it seems in that country to be a symptom of modest consciousness, and a tacit confession of what all know to be true, that French faces have in fact neither red nor white of their own. This humble acknowledgment of a defect looks the more like a virtue, being found among a people not remarkable for humility. Again, before we can prove the practice to be immoral, we must prove

immorality in the design of those who use it ; either that they intend a deception, or to kindle unlawful desires in the beholders. But the French ladies, so far as their purpose comes in question, must be acquitted of both those charges. Nobody supposes their colour to be natural for a moment, any more than he would if it were blue or green : and this unambiguous judgment of the matter is owing to two causes : first, to the universal knowledge we have, that French women are naturally either brown or yellow, with very few exceptions, and secondly, to the inartificial manner in which they paint : for they do not, as I am most satisfactorily informed, even attempt an imitation of nature, but besmear themselves hastily, and at a venture, anxious only to lay on enough. Where therefore there is no wanton intention, nor a wish to deceive, I can discover no immorality. But in England, (I am afraid,) our painted ladies are not clearly entitled to the same apology. They even imitate nature with such exactness, that the whole public is sometimes divided into parties who litigate with great warmth the question, whether painted or not ? This was remarkably the case with a Miss B——, whom I well remember. Her roses and lilies were never discovered to be spurious, till she attained an age that made the supposition of their being natural impossible. This anxiety to be not merely red and white, which is all they aim at in France, but to be thought very beautiful, and much more beautiful than nature has made them, is a symptom not very favourable to the idea we would wish to entertain of the chastity, purity, and modesty of our countrywomen. That they are guilty of a design to deceive, is certain. Otherwise why so much art ? and if to deceive, wherefore, and with what purpose ? Certainly either to gratify vanity of the silliest kind, or, which is still more criminal, to decoy and inveigle, and carry on more successfully the business of temptation. Here therefore my opinion splits itself into two opposite sides upon the same

question. I can suppose a French woman, though painted an inch deep, to be a virtuous, discreet, excellent character; and in no instance should I think the worse of one because she was painted. But an English belle must pardon me if I have not the same charity for her. She is at least an impostor, whether she cheats me or not, because she means to do so; and it is well if that be all the censure she deserves.

“This brings me to my second class of ideas upon this topic : and here I feel that I should be fearfully puzzled, were I called upon to recommend the practice on the score of convenience. If a husband chose that his wife should paint, perhaps it might be her duty, as well as her interest, to comply. But I think he would not much consult his own, for reasons that will follow. In the first place, she would admire herself the more; and in the next, if she managed the matter well, she might be more admired by others; an acquisition that might bring her virtue under trials, to which otherwise it might never have been exposed. In no other case however can I imagine the practice in this country to be either expedient or convenient. As a general one, it certainly is not expedient, because in general English women have no occasion for it. A swarthy complexion is a rarity here; and the sex, especially since inoculation has been so much in use, have very little cause to complain that nature has not been kind to them in the article of complexion. They may hide and spoil a good one; but they cannot (at least they hardly can,) give themselves a better. But even if they could, there is yet a tragedy in the sequel, which should make them tremble. I understand that in France, though the use of rouge be general, the use of white paint is far from being so. In England, she that uses one, commonly uses both. Now all white paints, or lotions, or whatever they may be called, are mercurial, consequently poisonous, consequently ruinous in time to the constitution. The Miss B—— above mentioned

was a miserable witness to this truth, it being certain that her flesh fell from her bones before she died. Lady Coventry was hardly a less melancholy proof of it ; and a London physician perhaps, were he at liberty to blab, could publish a bill of female mortality of a length that would astonish us.

“For these reasons, I utterly condemn the practice, as it obtains in England : and for a reason superior to all these, I must disapprove it. I cannot indeed discover that Scripture forbids it in so many words. But that anxious solicitude about the person, which such an artifice evidently betrays, is, I am sure, contrary to the tenor and spirit of it throughout. Show me a woman with a painted face, and I will show you a woman whose heart is set on things of the earth, and not on things above. But this observation of mine applies to it, only when it is an imitative art. For in the use of French women, I think it as innocent as in the use of a wild Indian, who draws a circle round her face, and makes two spots, perhaps blue, perhaps white, in the middle of it. Such are my thoughts upon the matter.

“ *Vive Valeque.*

“ Yours ever,

“ W. C.”

8.—TO THE REV. JOHN NEWTON.

COMPARISON BETWEEN THE ANCIENTS AND THE MODERNS.

“ *Feb. 10, 1784.*

“ MY DEAR FRIEND,—The morning is my writing time, and in the morning I have no spirits. So much the worse for my correspondents. Sleep, that refreshes my body, seems to cripple me in every other respect. As the evening approaches, I grow more alert, and when I am retiring to bed am more fit

for mental occupation than at any other time. So it fares with us whom they call nervous. By a strange inversion of the animal economy, we are ready to sleep when we have most need to be awake, and go to bed just when we might sit up to some purpose. The watch is irregularly wound up, it goes in the night when it is not wanted, and in the day stands still. In many respects we have the advantage of our forefathers the Picts. We sleep in a whole skin, and are not obliged to submit to the painful operation of puncturing ourselves from head to foot, in order that we may be decently dressed, and fit to appear abroad. But on the other hand, we have reason enough to envy them their tone of nerves, and that flow of spirits which effectually secured them from all uncomfortable impressions of a gloomy atmosphere, and from every shade of melancholy from every other cause. They understood, I suppose, the use of vulnerary herbs, having frequent occasion for some skill in surgery; but physicians, I presume, they had none, having no need of any. Is it possible that a creature like myself can be descended from such progenitors, in whom there appears not a single trace of family resemblance? What an alteration have a few ages made! They, without clothing, would defy the severest season; and I, with all the accommodations that art has since invented, am hardly secure, even in the mildest. If the wind blows upon me when my pores are open, I catch cold. A cough is the consequence. I suppose if such a disorder could have seized a Pict, his friends would have concluded that a bone had stuck in his throat, and that he was in some danger of choking. They would perhaps have addressed themselves to the cure of his cough by thrusting their fingers into his gullet, which would only have exasperated the case. But they would never have thought of administering laudanum, my only remedy. For this difference, however, that has obtained between me and my ancestors, I am indebted to the luxurious practices, and

enfeebling self-indulgence, of a long line of grandsires, who from generation to generation have been employed in deteriorating the breed, till at last the collected effects of all their follies have centred in my puny self,—a man indeed, but not the image of those who went before me ;—a man, who sighs and groans, who wears out life in dejection and oppression of spirits, and who never thinks of the aborigines of the country to which he belongs, without wishing that he had been born among them. The evil is without a remedy, unless the ages that are passed could be recalled, my whole pedigree be permitted to live again, and being properly admonished to beware of enervating sloth and refinement, would preserve their hardiness of nature unimpaired, and transmit the desirable quality to their posterity. I once saw Adam in a dream. We sometimes say of a picture that we doubt not its likeness to the original, though we never saw him ; a judgement we have some reason to form, when the face is strongly charactered, and the features full of expression. So I think of my visionary Adam, and for a similar reason. His figure was awkward indeed in the extreme. It was evident that he had never been taught by a Frenchman to hold his head erect or to turn out his toes ; to dispose gracefully of his arms, or to simper without a meaning. But if Mr. Bacon was called upon to produce a statue of Hercules, he need not wish for a juster pattern. He stood like a rock ; the size of his limbs, the prominence of his muscles, and the height of his stature, all conspired to bespeak him a creature whose strength had suffered no diminution ; and who, being the first of his race, did not come into the world under the necessity of sustaining a load of infirmities, derived to him from the intemperance of others. He was as much stouter than a Pict, as I suppose a Pict to have been than I. Upon my hypothesis, therefore, there has been a gradual declension, in point of bodily vigour, from Adam down to me : at least if my dream were a just

representation of that gentleman, and deserve the credit I cannot help giving it, such must have been the case.

“Yours, my dear Friend,

“W. C.”

9.—TO SAMUEL ROSE, ESQ.

“WESTON, Oct. 4, 1789.

“MY DEAR FRIEND,—The hamper is come, and come safe ; and the contents I can affirm on my own knowledge are excellent. It chanced that another hamper and a box came by the same conveyance, all which I unpacked and expounded in the hall ; my cousin sitting, mean time, on the stairs, spectatress of the business. We diverted ourselves with imagining the manner in which Homer would have described the scene. Detailed in his circumstantial way, it would have furnished materials for a paragraph of considerable length in an Odyssey.

‘The straw-stuff’d hamper with his rustless steel
He open’d, cutting sheer the inserted cords,
Which bound the lid and lip secure. Forth came
The rustling package first, bright straw of wheat,
Or oats, or barley ; next a bottle green
Throat-full, clear spirits the contents, distill’d
Drop after drop odorous, by the art
Of the fair mother of his friend—the Rose.’

And so on.

I should rejoice to be the hero of such a tale in the hands of Homer.

“You will remember, I trust, that when the state of your health or spirits calls for rural walks and fresh air, you have always a retreat at Weston.

“We are all well, all love you, down to the very dog ; and shall be glad to hear that you have exchanged languor for

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alacrity, and the debility that you mention, for indefatigable vigour.

“ Mr. Throckmorton has made me a handsome present; Villoison’s edition of the *Iliad*, elegantly bound by Edwards. If I live long enough, by the contributions of my friends, I shall once more be possessed of a library.

“ Adieu.”

10.—TO MRS. THROCKMORTON.

“ THE LODGE, *May 10, 1790.*

“ MY DEAR MRS. FROG,—You have by this time, I presume, heard from the Doctor, whom I desired to present to you our best affections, and to tell you that we are well. He sent an urchin (I do not mean a hedge-hog, commonly called an urchin in old times, but a boy, commonly so called at present), expecting that he would find you at Bucklands, whither he supposed you gone on Thursday. He sent him charged with divers articles, and among others with letters, or at least with a letter, which I mention, that if the boy should be lost, together with his dispatches, past all possibility of recovery, you may yet know that the Doctor stands acquitted of not writing. That he is utterly lost (that is to say, the boy, for the Doctor being the last antecedent, as the grammarians say, you might otherwise suppose that he was intended) is the more probable, because he was never four miles from his home before, having only travelled at the side of a plough-team; and when the Doctor gave him his directions to Bucklands, he asked, very naturally, if that place was in England. So what has become of him Heaven knows!

“ I do not know that any adventures have presented themselves since your departure worth mentioning, except that the rabbit, that infested your wilderness, has been shot for devouring your carnations; and that I myself have been in some

danger of being devoured in like manner by a great dog, viz. Pearson's. But I wrote him a letter on Friday (I mean a letter to Pearson, not to his dog, which I mention to prevent mistakes—for the said last antecedent might occasion them in this place also), informing him that unless he tied up his great mastiff in the day-time, I would send him a worse thing, commonly called and known by the name of an attorney. When I go forth to ramble in the fields, I do not sally, like Don Quixotè, with a purpose of encountering monsters, if any such can be found; but am a peaceable, poor gentleman, and a poet, who means nobody any harm,—the foxhunters and the two universities of this land excepted.

“I cannot learn from any creature whether the Turnpike-Bill is alive or dead;—so ignorant am I, and by such ignoramus surrounded. But if I know little else, this at least I know, that I love you, and Mr. Frog; that I long for your return, and that I am, with Mrs. Unwin's best affections,

“Ever yours.”

II.—TO THOMAS HAYLEY.

This indulgent letter to the young son of his friend Hayley, presents a remarkable proof of Cowper's amiability and candour. The boy, then little more than twelve years of age, had, at the poet's request, written some critical comments upon Cowper's Translation of Homer:—

“WESTON, *March 14, 1793.*

“MY DEAR LITTLE CRITIC,—I thank you heartily for your observations, on which I set a higher value, because they have instructed me as much, and have entertained me more, than all the other strictures of our public judges in these matters. Perhaps I am not much more pleased with *shameless wolf*, &c., than you. But what is to be done, my little man? Coarse as the expressions are, they are no more than equivalent to those

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of Homer. The invective of the ancients was never tempered with good manners, as your papa can tell you ; and my business, you know, is, not to be more polite than my author, but to represent him as closely as I can.

“ *Dishonour’d foul* I have wiped away, for the reason you give, which is a very just one, and the present reading is this,—

‘ Who had dared dishonour thus
The life itself,’ &c.

“ Your objection to *kindler of the fires of Heaven* I had the good fortune to anticipate, and expunged the dirty ambiguity some time since, wondering not a little that I had ever admitted it.

“ The fault you find with the two first verses of Nestor’s speech discovers such a degree of just discernment, that but for your papa’s assurance to the contrary, I must have suspected *him* as the author of that remark : much as I should have respected it, had it been so, I value it, I assure you, my little friend, still more as yours. In the new edition the passage will be found thus altered,—

‘ Alas ! great sorrow falls on Greece to-day,
Priam, and Priam’s sons, with all in Troy—
Oh ! how will they exult, and in their hearts
Triumph, once hearing of this broil between
The prime of Greece, in council, and in arms.’

“ Where the word *reel* suggests to you the idea of a drunken mountain, it performs the service to which I destined it. It is a bold metaphor ; but justified by one of the sublimest passages in Scripture, compared with the sublimity of which even that of Homer suffers humiliation.

“ It is God himself, who, speaking, I think, by the prophet Isaiah, says,—

‘The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard.’

With equal boldness in the same Scripture, the poetry of which was never equalled, mountains are said to skip, to break out into singing, and the fields to clap their hands. I intend, therefore, that my Olympus shall be still tipsy.

“The accuracy of your last remark, in which you convicted me of a bull, delights me. A fig for all critics but you! The blockheads could not find it. It shall stand thus,—

‘First spake Polydamus —.’

Homer was more upon his guard than to commit such a blunder, for he says,—

ἦρχ' ἀγορεύειν.

“And now, my dear little censor, once more accept my thanks. I only regret that your strictures are so few, being just and sensible as they are.

“Tell your papa that he shall hear from me soon; accept mine, and my dear invalid’s affectionate remembrances.

“Ever yours.”

12.—TO MRS. COWPER.

ON THE DEATH OF HER HUSBAND.

This letter shows that Cowper well understood how to direct others to the only Source of all true consolation, although his mental infirmity rendered him later unable to seek it in his own case.

“OLNEY, *August 31, 1769.*

“MY DEAR COUSIN,—A letter from your brother Frederick brought me yesterday the most afflicting intelligence that has reached me these many years. I pray to God to comfort

you, and to enable you to sustain this heavy stroke with that resignation to His will, which none but Himself can give, and which He gives to none but His own children. How blessed and happy is your lot, my dear friend, beyond the common lot of the greater part of mankind; that you know what it is to draw near to God in prayer, and are acquainted with a Throne of Grace! You have resources in the infinite love of a dear Redeemer, which are withheld from millions: and the promises of God, which are *yea and amen* in Jesus, are sufficient to answer all your necessities, and to sweeten the bitterest cup which your heavenly Father will ever put into your hand. May He now give you liberty to drink at these wells of salvation, till you are filled with consolation and peace in the midst of trouble! He has said, When thou passest through the fire I will be with thee, and when through the floods, they shall not overflow thee. You have need of such a word as this, and He knows your need of it, and the time of necessity is the time when He will be sure to appear in behalf of those who trust in Him. I bear you and yours upon my heart before Him night and day, for I never expect to hear of distress which shall call upon me with a louder voice to pray for the sufferer. I know the Lord hears me for myself, vile and sinful as I am, and believe and am sure that He will hear me for you also. He is the friend of the widow, and the father of the fatherless, even God in His holy habitation; in all our afflictions He is afflicted, and chastens us in mercy. Surely He will sanctify this dispensation to you, do you great and everlasting good by it, make the world appear like dust and vanity in your sight, as it truly is, and open to your view the glories of a better country, where there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor pain, but God shall wipe away all tears from your eyes for ever. O that comfortable word! 'I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction:' so that our

very sorrows are evidences of our calling, and He chastens us, because we are his children.

“ My dear cousin, I commit you to the word of his Grace, and to the comforts of his Holy Spirit. Your life is needful for your family ; may God in mercy to them prolong it, and may He preserve you from the dangerous effects which a stroke like this might have upon a frame so tender as yours. I grieve with you, I pray for you ; could I do more, I would ; but God must comfort you.

“ Yours, in our dear Lord Jesus.”

CHAPTER III.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF ARTHUR WILSON.

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IN Peck's '*Desiderata Curiosa*' was first published a very curious paper, being the life of Mr. Arthur Wilson, which he entitles—'Observations on God's Providence in the Tract of my Life.' Peck, a laborious antiquary, describes this autobiography as being printed "From the Original (all of the author's own handwriting) in the hands of Samuel Knight, S. T. P., Archdeacon of Berks."

Arthur Wilson is entitled to rank amongst our original historians as being the author of a folio volume, entitled 'The History of Great Britain, being the Life and Reign of K. James I., relating to what passed from his first Access to the Crown till his Death, London. M.DC.LIII.' This book, which may be advantageously consulted by the student of that era, is reprinted in the second volume of the valuable collection known as 'Kennet's History of England.' In a note by the editor of that series there is a brief account of the historian of James I., which I transcribe:—

"The author, *Arthur Wilson*, was a native of *Suffolk*, of a good family. He was bred up at *Trinity College* in *Oxford*, where he commenced Master of Arts in 1633. Some years after he travelled through Spain, Germany, Italy, and France, with Robert Devereux, the last Earl of *Essex* of that name, who had a particular friendship for him, that lasted till that noble earl's death. It was in his company, and through his acquaintance, that Mr. Wilson became perfectly well informed in all the material transactions of King James's reign: and it was the Earl of *Essex* that first put him upon writing the history of it, wherein he had the use and perusal of a great many papers of that earl's, and of his father's fast friend and fellow-sufferer the Earl of *Southampton*, who were both near spectators and sometimes actors in the affairs of that time."

Arthur Wilson's 'History' has the reputation of being not altogether favourable to the character of James I. At the time when it was published it was quite safe to speak honestly of the Stuarts, nevertheless

there is little of bitterness in the historian's remarks, and not much that can be regarded as one-sided. The following extract is amusing, and furnishes some notion of the author's satirical power :—

“A.D. 1621.—And as these troubles bred disturbance at home, so they begot discredit abroad ; for now (by this breach) they undervalued the King's power as much as they did before his spirit ; yea, even in the King of *Spain's* own towns, (whilst this beloved treaty was in heat) they in their comedies presented messengers bringing news in haste, that the *Palatinate* was like to have a very formidable army shortly on foot : For the King of *Denmark* would furnish him with a hundred thousand pickel'd-herrings, the *Hollanders* with a hundred thousand butter-boxes, and England with a hundred thousand Ambassadors. And they picture the King in one place with a scabbard without a sword : In another place with a sword that nobody could draw out, tho' divers stand pulling at it. At Brussels they painted him with his pockets hanging out, and never a penny in them nor in his purse turned upside down. In *Antwerp* they pictured the Queen of *Bohemia* like a poor *Irish* mantler, with her hair hanging about her ears, and her child at her back, with the King her father carrying the cradle after her ; and every one of these pictures had several motto's, expressing their malice. Such scorns and contempt were put upon the King, and in him the whole nation.”

Having thus introduced Mr. Arthur Wilson to my readers, I now proceed to his autobiography, premising that I select only a few of the most readable passages.

Mr. Wilson, in relating some of his hairbreadth escapes, brings them forward as illustrations of “God's Providence” in his preservation. It would appear that he and his patron, the Earl of Essex, were as bold riders as any of those of the present day, who imperil life and limb in steeplechases. There was no sporting journal in those days, or assuredly the following would have found a wider circulation than in Peck's dreary folio.

“My Lord would ride very hard, and lov’d it extremely. He was an excellent horseman : fourscore or a hundred miles a day I have often ridden with his Lordship. Going from Drayton in Staffordshire to the Earl of Hertford’s in Wiltshire, the Lord Cromwell being with him, they dined at Warwick. And the said Lord had a constitution, that he could not settle his stomach, ’till he had enough to overlay his head : Which he did then without a partner. As soon as we had past the town stones, to spare their feet, our horses had the feeling of our heels. My Lord Cromwell put for it (being well armed and hors’d) with such a fury, that he made my horse run away with me. At the bridge, a mile beyond Warwick, the waters were out. My Lord of Essex took up, before he came to them ; being on a well-guided horse. My Lord Cromwell had a strong horse which plunged with much ado through the water. I rid upon a Barberic which I could not command, a fiery nag ; and he carried me into the water ; and, he not being able to go through it, nor I to stop him ; we floundered into the midst of it ; and, being parted by the water, we shifted for ourselves, and came dropping out.

“But, after shaking our ears, we pieced again and away. And so we rid as fast as our horses could ply it, for some five or six miles ; till my Lord Cromwell’s horse (he being a heavy man) was so tired, he was scarce able to trot. My Lord of Essex kept his horse within compass. So away he alone, towards Burford (whither his coach and train was gone before), and commanded me to stay and come with my Lord Cromwell, to be his guide.

“It was about Michaelmas time, and grew to be dark before we got to Stow in the Wold, where my Lord Cromwell thought to have staid. But, meeting with one Hibbitts, the Sheriff of Gloucestershire there, as well warmed as himself, they began to snarl at one another. So that I persuaded

his Lordship to go to Burford, though I was in ill case for it.

“So out we went upon the Downs, and (though I knew the way, and was in it, yet (it) being very dark, and his Lordship not in case to be governed) he would take his own way. And I was forced to follow him close: because his horse being black, if he were but a length before me I could not see him. At last he came to a hedge and ditch; and over he would force his horse. In the leap, they both came down; and his foot hung in the stirrup. I whipt over after him, took his horse by the bridle, stopt him, lighted, and with much ado, got his foot out, and his heavy body up again; persuading him to take another way: assuring him, the further he went, the more he was out. And so (having rid some three hours in cold blood, and beginning to be sensible of [the inconvenience] of lying in the fields) his Lordship was content to take advice. So easy it is to be persuaded, when necessity compels us to see our error. And so, riding to a light, I shewed him not far from us, we found, with all our travel, we were but two miles from Stow whence we came, and whither we returned about ten a clock at night.

“And this I observe is an act of God’s great mercy to me, that, being soaked in water in a cold evening, (tho’) I was forced to ride (a foot-pace, for the most part) so many hours, ’till the water of my clothes was all dropped into my boots, (so) that when I alighted I stood as in a bath; yet the next morning, I rise refreshed, and never felt more of it.”

One of the moving accidents to which Arthur Wilson, as a bold horseman, was subjected, supplied him with a motive for writing his autobiography. There is a genuine mark of religious trust in the following extract, coupled with a very instructive summary of the innocent life of a man who lived in times when he was fortunate who could avoid giving offence or resenting injury.

"The 18 of July, 1644, hunting in Titley Park, my spotted nag (which afterwards my Lord had) being young and not well weighed, ran away with me; and leaping over a broad ditch, lighted upon a stump of a tree, which he floundering on, overthrew me and himself. When I rose, I could scarce draw my breath. I drank something to dissolve the putrid blood, and was let blood in the right arm. But the pain continueth at the writing of this, yet, I hope, in a decaying condition.

"The 21 of July (being the Sunday following) Mr. Beadle of Banston preached at Leeze. His text was, Numbers xxxiii. 1. These are the journeys of the children of Israel, &c., insisting upon this, That every Christian ought to keep a record of his own actions and ways, being full of dangers and hazards; that God might have the glory. For this command was given to Moses, as in the Second Verse, by God Himself; that there might be a Remembrance to Posterity of the deliverances which God had and would work for that people. And so every man, though of the meanest quality, may see the hand of the divine goodness working for him in the many occurrences of his life. Which, as it may be a register to his own memory, so it may be an example of gratitude to those who shall read or hear it, when they shall reflect upon themselves; and make a like collection of God's mercy towards them; some more, some less, according as it pleases God to distribute his blessings. Which I shall ever acknowledge in the highest degree to myself.

"This made me run back to the beginning of my life, assisted by my memory, and some small notes; wherein I have given a true, though a mean delineation of eight and forty years' progress in the world. Wherein I never was arrested, nor arrested any man; never sued any man, nor was sued by any man (but in that particular of Mr. King;) never was examined nor brought before a magistrate; never took

oath, but the Oath of Allegiance ; never bore witness, nor was called to witness in any business. So that though I lived in the world, I was not beaten with the tempests of it ; shrouding myself under those goodly cedars, my two noble masters ; whose actions deserve an everlasting monument.

“ If in this I can dedicate a thankful heart to the great and Almighty Disposer of all things, it shall be his ; because he made it, he mov’d it. Every morning begins a mercy to us ; every night concludes one ; so the morning and the evening are the Day of Mercy. But these, being common, take no great impression in us. If we could sift out the grossness of our own corruptions, we should find a pure and most refined Power working for us, and striving with us.”

I take my leave of Arthur Wilson with an extract which shows him superior to the cruel superstition of his age, in the persecution of witches. No one but a wise and just man could have written as follows. Happy was it for him that his autobiography remained in manuscript during the reign of the Puritans, or he would probably have come under that sectarian discipline which ascribed the unbelief in witchcraft as a token of an anti-religious spirit.

“ There is nothing upon the stage of the world, acted by public justice, comes so cross to my temper, as putting so many witches to death. Nor is it a new thing. The Scripture not only making mention of them, but condemning them. And it hath been, in a long series of time, the practice of all states and kingdoms, not to suffer those they call witches to live.

“ About this time in Essex, there being a great many arraigned, I was at Chelmsford at the trial and execution of eighteen women. But could see nothing in the evidence which did persuade me to think them other than poor, melancholy, envious, mischievous, ill-disposed, ill-dieted, atrabilus

constitutions; whose fancies working by gross fumes and vapors, might make the imagination ready to take any impression; whereby their anger and envy might vent itself into such expressions, as the hearers of their confessions (who gave evidence) might find cause to believe, they were such people as they blazoned themselves to be.

“And they themselves by the strength of fancy, may think they bring such things to pass, which many times, unhappily they wish for, and rejoice in, when done, out of the malevolent humour which is in them; which passes with them, as if they had really acted it.

“And if there be an opinion in the people that such a body is a witch, their own fears (coming where they are) resulting from such dreadful apprehensions, do make every shadow an apparition; and every rat or cat, an imp or spirit. Which make so many tales and stories in the world, which have no shadow of truth. This will be better asserted in another place; and those texts of Scripture genuinely interpreted: which will be too large for this place.

“But one day, not long after this execution, my meditations fixing upon that subject, I had a great conflicting in my spirit, how to discover this blind path, which the world for so many ages hath trod in, to be a mistaken way. And again, some hours time, in my secret thoughts, admiring the Justice and Mercy of God; Mercy in restraining Satan and keeping him in chains; Justice in letting him loose, for the execution of his own decrees. At last I fixed upon this assertion; That it did not consist with the infinite goodness of the Almighty God, to let Satan loose in so ravenous a way, upon poor, melancholy, darkminded, discontented creatures; and let him be bound up from acting this, his most sordid part, with such whose constitutions were ready to kick at Heaven, by all kinds of atheism, profaneness, and wickedness. Though I did conceive, that God

in his wisdom, had his several dispensations; and could proportion punishments to every man's sin: Which was not fit for me to pry into, but humbly to submit to the Almighty Power, with, O the Depth, &c., yet could I not be satisfied. But (with strugglings and wrestlings with God, with tears and prayers) humbly besought him, either to take this opinion from me (which is, that Satan doth not work these effects by witches, which themselves confess) or to confirm it to me, some way or other, that he doth; that I might not live in error.

"And this was presented to God with all humility of soul; submitting my will to his; and (with prayers) that he would not impute this to me as a presumption. Laying my desires at his feet and being wing'd with such a spirit, as, I thought at that Time, was able to overcome Satan arm'd with his malice.

"I came to this conclusion. That if it be true, that Satan doth work these effects (in a particular way) I might see something to assure it to me. If not, that I might see nothing.

"This (being in itself an unlawful desire and a tempting of the Almighty) might well appal poor flesh and blood to ask it. And so it did. For a trembling seiz'd me when I had spoke the words. But I neither saw, heard, or found any thing, but my own fears. Which weaker spirits might have been worse transported with. But this I acknowledge a great presumption in me, and a greater Mercy and Indulgence in God, to his poor, weak creature, to pass by his infirmity.

"But I never had cause since to alter this opinion; nor do I find it any way derogatory to the Honor of God; or, inconsistent with his Justice and Mercy, that I do not believe the vain chimeras, without any superstructure of reason, which the people build upon this foundation."

CHAPTER IV.

BALLITORE.

1. THE SHACKLETONS.
2. EDMUND BURKE AND RICHARD SHACKLETON.
3. BALLITORE DURING THE REBELLION.
4. MARY LEADBEATER AND MELESINA TRENCH.
5. MARY LEADBEATER AND GEORGE CRABBE.

CHAPTER IV.

BALLITORE.

I.—THE SHACKLETONS.

MRS. TRENCH, whose very interesting 'Remains,' edited by her son, the then Dean of Westminster, were published a few years back, writing to her friend Mrs. Leadbeater, in 1802, says :—

"Your *prose* 'Ballitore' resembles a highly-finished Dutch painting, in which one of the best artists has represented village scenery and manners, and where one is not only struck by the general effect, but amused and interested by the details, which all bear to be separately examined. Your minutest touches have their value, and the whole wears the stamp of truth and nature. Many parts are very affecting. As a faithful portrait of a small but interesting circle it is really curious, and will become more so every day, as those minute particulars, neglected by the historian and exaggerated by the novelist, increase in value as they increase in years. They throw the strongest light on the progress of luxury, and the changes of modes and customs ; so, perhaps, many of the most trifling circumstances you have recorded may furnish matter whence our great grandchildren may draw important conclusions."

Quite agreeing in these remarks, we propose giving some selections from the 'Annals,' to which they refer,* for the benefit of those of our readers who may not have time or opportunity to make the acquaint-

* 'Annals of Ballitore,' published in the 'Leadbeater Papers.'—Bell and Daldy, 1862.

ance of this interesting Quaker colony, as portrayed by one of themselves. Mary Shackleton, afterwards Mary Leadbeater, thus describes her native village :—

“ Ballitore, in the county of Kildare, twenty-eight Irish miles from Dublin, is a village a little off the high-road from Dublin to Cork. It is situated in a valley encompassed by gently rising hills, except where the river Griese takes its meandering course of about fourteen miles from its spring at Tubber, in the county of Wicklow, to its union with the Barrow near Jerusalem, a little hamlet in the county of Kildare. Ballitore derives its name from its former marshy condition (‘bally,’ in Irish, signifying a town or village, and ‘togher’ a bog), from which it was reclaimed by drainage and careful cultivation. This fertile portion of land was purchased about the end of the seventeenth century by John Barcroft and Abel Strettel, respectable members of the Society of Friends. It is reported to have been very bare of wood till the new proprietors began to plant, which they did abundantly, and groves, orchards, and thick hedge-rows soon adorned the valley. . . .

“ The first abode in entering the village was that of old Abraham Shackleton, a man whose memory was long held in veneration. His exterior bespoke his character; his countenance expressed the sweetness and humility of his mind, mixed with a gravity sometimes bordering on austerity. . . . He was a native of Yorkshire, and became an assistant in the school of David Hall, of Skipton, in whose family his future wife, Margaret Wilkinson, David Hall’s near relation, was also an inmate. Having removed to Ireland, he was engaged by William Cooper, of Cooper-hill, and John Duckett, of Duckett’s-grove, who were both country gentlemen and Quakers, as private tutor to their children. Sensible of his talents and worth, they encouraged him to open a boarding-school, which he did in Ballitore on the first of the third month, 1726, having previously prevailed

on his beloved Margaret to become his wife, and accompany him to a strange land. Under the auspices of piety and honesty, the school prospered beyond their humble hopes."

The annalist, Abraham Shackleton's grand-daughter, thus continues:—

"Ballitore school, at the earliest period to which my memory extends, was kept by my father, Richard Shackleton, who was then in the prime of life. . . . He married Elizabeth Fuller, an amiable and worthy young woman, to whom he had been long attached, and who left him, at the age of twenty-eight, a sorrowful widower with four young children, the last of whom, a son, was born shortly before the death of his mother, and survived her only two years. Shortly after the death of this child, Richard Shackleton married Elizabeth Carleton. . . . Lads have been educated in the family, and were surprised to hear afterwards that my father's children were born of different mothers. The worthy pair were desirous above all things to promote the cause of truth and righteousness, and were anxiously concerned faithfully to discharge the arduous occupation in which they were engaged. Richard Shackleton was a man of wit and learning; he had a genius for poetry, and was conversant with the classics. Superior to these was his deep and solid understanding, and, far excelling all, an honest and benevolent heart. . . . His wife had not his liveliness of disposition; she was grave, circumspect, and cautious, perhaps to an extreme. She took upon herself the care of all within and without, and entered into the affairs of her poor neighbours, not from curiosity, but kindness. . . . She entertained a few rather singular scruples, one of which was her objection to images, even in china, on which we sometimes amused ourselves with finding an almost imperceptible man or bird. To gratify this scruple, the parent of one of the pupils procured for

her a tea-service from China without any images. Her consideration for her fellow-creatures would not permit her to cover her floor with what might cover the poor, and, being remarkable for neatness, it was a difficulty to contrive what should at once keep her apartments clean, and her mind easy. Hair-cloth was a bad substitute for carpets, but when listings were introduced, the discovery was welcomed by my mother as a valuable one ; industry and dexterity were soon exercised, and the rooms were presently furnished to her satisfaction. . . .

“ When the venerable Abraham Shackleton had resigned into the hands of his son his post of usefulness to the rising generation, he employed his time either in religious visits, or in cultivating his land at home ; for he was active for his years, and delighting in agriculture, was wont to work with his own men in summer-time with his coat stripped off, and labouring as hard as they did. A poor man who saw him assisting in shaking his orchard vigorously in his seventy-second year, enumerated the perfections that were apparent even then in his frame, and concluded with, ‘ It would be a murder you should ever die ! ’ My little sister and I were sometimes indulged in being permitted to accompany him to his meadows, to toss the hay with small pitchforks which he had got made for us. He was kind to us, but was never pleased when he saw us playing with our dolls. His general deportment was very grave, yet we loved and venerated without fearing him.”

The scrupulous conscience natural in the child of such parents is amusingly shown in the following anecdote :—

“ Though our general conduct was, I suppose, not more correct than that of other children of our age who had like advantages, we had great awe, not to say terror, on our minds, of committing offences against religion. For this reason, we thought we must not speak to transgressors ; and I remember

an incident, singular enough, which befel me when very young. I was engaged in working a pair of pockets for myself in a shell pattern with green worsted. My brother called in ; I showed him my pocket ; and, willing to exhibit my dexterity, began to work at it, when, on a sudden, I recollected it was First-day. Alarmed at what I had done, I laid my work down in dismay, and went to my favourite window in the garret, which commanded a pretty view. While I was thus solacing my eyes and comforting my heart, the window-sash fell on my neck, and made me a prisoner. I roared with all my might. My aunt heard the cries, which, being outside the house, she feared one of us had fallen into 'The Sconce,' and ran about, greatly terrified, to search for us, whilst the continued wailings resounded in her ears. At length, finding that no one came to the rescue, I made a desperate effort, and disengaged myself, having escaped with a bruised neck and scratched face ; but I firmly believed that this accident befel me because I had broken the Sabbath."

The same tender conscience was conspicuous in Mary's brother, Abraham, and led, in later years, to the temporary closing of Ballitore school. Mrs. Leadbeater writes of the year 1803 :—

"For many years past my brother had entertained strong objections to the study of those authors which treat in seducing language of the illusions of love and the trade of war ; and he published an advertisement declining to include such works in his course of education, thus relinquishing the credit and profit of preparing lads for college. During the year of the rebellion the school was further reduced, many of his pupils being taken home by their parents on account of the disturbed state of the times ; and in 1801, declining to receive any more pupils, though many were still pressed upon him, he removed to reside at the mill and superintend the business there, leaving part of

his family at the old mansion. In the present year the school was closed, to my great regret."

The school was re-opened in 1807, on the marriage of Abraham Shackleton's daughter, Lydia, with James White, who took the post vacated by his father-in-law. After this

"The school increased rapidly, and Ballitore got its old look again; the 'boys' gardens, long neglected, encompassing the back court, displayed taste and industry once more; the ball bounded in the ball-alley; the marbles rolled, and the tops spun. Eight of the bigger boys joined for a while in the compilation of a manuscript newspaper; a taste for poetry occasionally appeared; and I felt that schoolboys were in all ages the same kind of beings."

Nearly twenty years later, in a letter to Mrs. Trench, Mary Leadbeater records, with innocent pride,—

"The 13th of this month a jubilee was held, on the completion of a hundred years since Ballitore School was opened. It was celebrated with much pomp and circumstance in Dublin, at Morrison's, where the dinner was served on plate, and Morrison himself placed before Richard Shackleton the Ballitore rice-pudding. It was also celebrated in Limerick; and at Ballitore there was a delightful evening party in the school-room, which was decorated with festoons of evergreens and flowers, with 'A. S.' and 'J. W.,' the initials of the founder and of the present master, formed of bunches of violets, at each end of the room. There were sixty present."

This was written nearly at the close of the annalist's long life—a life of which every circumstance had been connected with Ballitore school. In an earlier letter to the same friend, she mentions the strong affection which existed between the scholars and their master's family:—

“The pupils were greatly attached to their preceptor and to their motherly mistress, and they extended their affection to all the branches of the family, whom they were always pleased to meet. Often have I looked back on my conduct when a girl, and ceased to wonder at the remarks which were then made upon it ; for how extremely odd must it have appeared to see me, a remarkably simple-looking Quaker girl, in deep chat with an officer or a collegian, dressed in their respective uniforms, whilst, walking along the streets of Dublin, or standing at a door or a window, we eagerly interchanged questions and replies, and delivered ourselves to the pleasure of recalling past scenes and hearing of old acquaintance. A young officer, in full uniform, once pressed my mother and a friend of hers who was equally grave and simple, to accept each an arm in the most public parts of Dublin. My mother was afraid the mob would pursue and insult them, and declined his offer. This grieved his sincere and affectionate heart, and he complained bitterly that his ‘odious regimentals’ prevented his ‘old mistress’ from walking with him, and he never appeared before us in that dress again.”

These occasional visits to Dublin formed the only variety in the Quaker girl’s quiet life, with one remarkable exception :—

“In the year 1784 my father took me to London, to attend the Yearly Meeting of Friends. While there, we frequently visited Edmund Burke, and at his house we met some distinguished characters. . . . From London we went by earnest invitation to Beaconsfield, which seemed to me a paradise on earth. . . . After leaving Beaconsfield, my father and I went to a far different scene, and amongst singularly different people—to a little village in Yorkshire, and on a visit to some very primitive relatives, amongst whom my father left me for awhile. Many amusing passages occurred during my

stay. Quite regardless of my blushing shamefacedness, my relations invariably introduced me to their friends as 'Our coosin frae Ireland that maks the bonnie verses;' which was frequently followed by the entreaty, 'Say some of them, wilt thoo?' The place was remarkably secluded, and shut out from the world. Retired as was my native place, this was still more so; and primitive as were the inhabitants of Ballitore, they were fashionable people of the world compared with those of Selby. The 'great hoose,' where the Squire resided, was the object of their exceeding admiration, and my relatives were most anxious that I should obtain an entrance, yet dubious whether I should be esteemed worthy of an invitation, although the owner graciously permitted his silver coffee-pot to be sent to every house in the village where I was entertained, to do me due honour as a visitor.

"At length the much-coveted invitation came, and, dressed in their 'best bra's,' my cousins went with me to the great house. There I saw the coffee-pot at home, with its grand adjuncts in all their splendour. After tea was over, the company were invited to ascend to the roof of the house. Upon scrambling out upon the leads, we found chairs placed for our accommodation, and refreshments were handed round. Beneath a broiling sun I strove to admire the surrounding landscape, which was not at all worth the toil and trouble we endured. At length the silent, stately visit was concluded, and we were permitted to descend and return home; but all through the remainder of my stay, this evening was descanted upon by my cousins with delight, and every acquaintance was saluted with, 'Dost know our coosin was at the great hoose to tak' tea?' As is usual in that part of England, there was in the dwelling of my friends one large apartment, neither parlour nor kitchen, called 'the hoose,' in which the family usually sat, but they insisted on my sitting in solitary state in the parlour. On

First-days, after meeting, the old folks sat in 'the hoose,' each with a Bible in hand, reading aloud from it, while the daughter read in her Bible, also aloud ; and, peering over my shoulder, stood the son behind my chair, reading aloud from the Bible which I was silently studying. No two of the readers, except myself and my companion, were perusing the same part of the Sacred Volume. Yet, notwithstanding their peculiarities, I was happy in the warm affection of these simple people, and always remembered this visit to England as some of the golden days of my youth : Beaconsfield and Selby were both so interesting and so different."

2. EDMUND BURKE AND RICHARD SHACKLETON.

The correspondence between Edmund Burke and Richard Shackleton gives us an interesting view of the great statesman's character in early life. In his later letters also, we have the advantage of seeing his mind in that *undress* in which most men allow their inmost selves to appear before some one familiar friend. Burke says himself of this correspondence:—

"I do not know to whom I could write with greater freedom and less regularity than to you ; for as the thoughts come crowding into my head, I cannot forbear putting 'em down, be they in what order or disorder they will."

Mrs. Leadbeater tells us:—

"Richard Shackleton's intimacy with Edmund Burke commenced when Edmund was the pupil of old Abraham Shackleton, from whose school he entered Trinity College, in the year 1744. He came to Ballitore, with his elder brother Garrett, and his younger brother Richard, on the 26th of Fifth-month, 1741. They had been when very young at school with an old woman who was so cross, and they resented her crossness so

much, that one holiday the three little fellows set out for her cabin with intent to kill her. As her good genius would have it she happened to be from home, and their fit of fury evaporated before the next opportunity. Garrett Burke, who had a great turn for humour, was an eminent lawyer, and died before my time. His brother Richard could not be excelled by him in his talent for drollery, and it is well known that Edmund also had his share."

Edmund's "share" is abundantly shown in his letters to his friend "Dick," after his removal from Ballitore to Dublin. But these writings of the boy of sixteen give evidence of many things much higher than a "talent for drollery." The following letter shows something of this talent, and something also of that tendency to self-analysis which is a remarkable feature in the whole correspondence:—

"DUBLIN, *July 5th, 1744, from my own apartment.*

"*Thursday, half an hour after 12.*

"DEAR DICK, I hope, is convinced that I sit down to nothing with so great pleasure as to write to him, and that there is no enjoyment that I would not most willingly sacrifice unto it; and though I must confess my inability to entertain him with anything which is not trifling, I hope he will excuse me when he considers that I buy his correspondence at a dear rate—even at the price of being ridiculous, which will show how much I prize it; but this is not to the purpose, therefore I now proceed to answer your letters (alias, agreeable favours). You hope I am genteel, you say, and impudent. As for the first, I have not the least pretensions; but I really think I have such a stock of the latter, that I may well say, 'From more of it, good Lord, deliver us;' but I am very much afraid that I never shall be able to attain to that becoming confidence which renders a person so agreeable in all companies he converses with. Another thing, dear Dick, to tell my own im-

perfections, is, I am quite dumb in mixed company, for there the discourse is more confined, seldom extends further than news, the weather, and dress, which, as Mr. Addison justly remarks in the *Spectator*, is wonderful, considering as there are a greater number of persons by, that more ideas should not start up among 'em to furnish topics for conversation ; but this I am endeavouring to wean myself from. Never fear my losing your letter in the College, for it would be a terrible thing for me, indeed, if such a treasonable paper should be found after me ; besides, I am too fond of dear Dick's letters to expose [em] after that manner, by carrying 'em in my pocket. The things you ordered me to buy I will bring with me when I go towards your regions. Your criticism on your writing is both judicious and witty ; and since you give such hard names to such an excellent piece of penmanship as yours, pray what title will you give mine ? ' And now to conclude the answer of your favour, my sister, alias your Dulcinea, protests she will not have the least compassion on your sufferings, or favour you in any sort, unless you act the true knight-errant, and obey these few commands which she desires me to give you, and—

“ 1st.—That you immediately take horse, attended only with one trusty squire, and go in search of adventures until you arrive at Scarecroania, a great island in the Caspian Sea, where King Chrononhotonthologos keeps his court ; and when you come there you must without delay march to the castle, the first gate of which is guarded by a giant with a mighty club, called Hurllothrumbo. Him if you pass you go into an open court, and thence to another gate, which is guarded by two dread griffins, who stand with open jaws ready to devour you. If you kill these, you have free access into the next court, in which stand five hundred valiant knights, all cased in armour of shining steel, and above them, in a gallery, 150 dire enchanters with envenomed spells, all which you must conquer

before you can come near the apartment of King Chrononhotonthologos; and even then you must penetrate through fifty thousand brasen doors, lock'd with inexorable bolts, before you can touch the monarch of Scarecroania. Him you must kill, take out his heart, which is hairy, and in it you will find a little drop of blood called Cupido; this you must put in a phial, which is on the summit of a tower in his castle sixty thousand yards high, the walls of which are as smooth as glass, without a ladder or step. You see the danger—undertake it if you will.

“2nd.—She desires you to take Egypt in your way, and you will find ranged among the Pyramids 800,000 millions of valiant soldiers and sixty millions of enchanters, headed by the chief magician, Kalistopoiomenos of the Square Cap. These you cannot destroy, for their number, any otherwise than by throwing down the Pyramids upon their heads. After this, that your mistress may see your conquests, you must vanquish the giant Poluphlosboiomenos, who is seventy thousand cubits high, and has 20,000 pair of hands, and make him carry to her all their heads. . . . So much for your fine flourish at the end of your favour. Now I proceed to your last, and inform you that I am perfectly easy on that score, and receive very few set-downs. I wrote to Dick about cleanliness; desire him to show you the letter, and you will oblige me if you read it to him, and take occasion from thence to recommend cleanliness to him. I beg of you (as I am well assured of your friendship I know you won't refuse) to acquaint me of Dick's behaviour; whether he is changed for the better or the worse, or whether he is as cross as usual, or whether he endeavours to please your father or those put over him impartially. As you choose to represent yourself as a considerable man in the republic of Dullness, I shall endeavour to exceed you by being king of it, and styling myself

“C. CIBBER, Esq., Laur.”

The boyish nonsense contained in this letter is in remarkable contrast with the earnest and almost solemn style into which the future orator occasionally rises. The following impassioned outburst gives promise of the eloquence which would one day stir all hearts:—

“What grander idea can the mind of man form to itself than a prodigious, glorious, and fiery globe hanging in the midst of an infinite and boundless space, surrounded with bodies of whom our earth is scarcely anything in comparison, moving their rounds about its body, and held tight to their respective orbits by the attractive force inherent to it; while they are expended in the same space by the force of the Creator’s almighty arm! And then let us cast our eyes up to the spangled canopy of heaven, where innumerable luminaries, at such an immense distance from us, cover the face of the skies—all suns as great as that which illumines us—surrounded with earths perhaps no way inferior to the ball which we inhabit, and no part of the amazing whole unfilled; systems running into systems, and worlds bordering on worlds! Sun, earth, moon, stars, be ye made, and they were made! The word of the Creator sufficient to create universe from nothing! Pursue the noble task; a nobler theme was never sung!”

The tendency to self-analysis, which we have mentioned, leads to reflections, the depth and clearness of which are wonderful in so young a lad:—

“I am entirely of your opinion concerning being diligent; I know that it’s the gate by which we must pass to knowledge and fortune—that without it we are both unserviceable to ourselves and our fellow-creatures, and a burthen to the earth; knowledge is, doubtless, the greatest acquisition we can make, because it is what denominates us men, and, as you remarked, is the most essential difference between us and the brute beasts. I shall say no more about it for fear I should be asked the question, why I don’t follow what I so much approve, and be

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more studious? Perhaps *bona videoque, proboque; deteriora sequor*, is applicable to me. I know what is good, like the Athenians; but don't practise, like the Lacedæmonians. What would not I give to have my spirits a little more settled! I am too giddy; this is the bane of my life; it hurries me from my studies to trifles, and I am afraid it will hinder me from knowing anything thoroughly."

Referring to the creed of his Quaker friend, Burke continues:—

"Far be it from me to exclude from salvation such as believe not as I do; but indeed it is a melancholy thing to consider the diversities of sects and opinions amongst us. Men should not for a small matter commit so great a crime as breaking the unity of the Church; and I am sure if the spirit of humility, the greatest of Christian virtues, was our guide, our sects and our religions would be much fewer. . . .

"It is the business of every one to search whether their way be good; and if any man who knows this to be his duty—as there is no Christian but does—if (I say) he willingly neglects this, and be found in a wrong way, he will not be held guiltless before God. Then, my dear Dick, let us take this into consideration (for indeed it is a serious affair, and worth the attention even of our whole lives), and implore the assistance of the Holy Spirit, which leads into all truth, and endeavour to walk piously and godlily in the path our Great Redeemer has showed us; confiding very little in our strength, but casting ourselves upon Him who died for us, and with great humility asking His assistance in knowing what manner of serving Him will best please Him, that we may not be in the number of those whose ignorance is justly imputed to themselves. If we do this, I do not in the least doubt but that God, of his great mercy, will guide us in the right road. . . .

"God gives me good resolves sometimes, and I lead a better

life ; they last for a time or so,—sometimes more, sometimes less,—and then, through the fickleness of my temper, and too great confidence in myself, I fall into my old courses,—ay, often far worse. You see my weakness, dear Dick, and my failings,—plead and pray for me ; we will pray for one another reciprocally. Praise be to His holy name for all things ; for every impulse of His grace he gives me, I praise Him ; and trust that He will continue 'em to me, and make me persevere in 'em. Let us lead the best life we can, and make it our study to please Him the best we can, both in faith and works. I could write a great deal more with pleasure ; I dare not say you would be tired with reading, but that I find my paper almost gone.”

As a relief after this serious strain, we find the young preacher, in his next letter, full of childish pranks :—

“I have not seen such a flood in the Liffey, as is now, for some years : and our cellars, as well as all on the quay, are full of water, and I, like a good child, spent most of the morning sailing on it in a tub ; and I believe I should be at it till now, had not the water grown too deep, and an accident befallen me, which was this. After having made two or three pretty successful voyages into the Ocean of our street kitchen, I had a mind to try my fortune in the Back Sea ; but to be short, as soon as I entered it, I perceived at a distance two bottles in a terrible condition, who making signals of distress, I made what sail I could to their relief. But lo ! my ballast leaning starboard, sunk me to the bottom, so I was thrown ashore at a great distance from where I foundered, and having changed my clothes (my courage, as you may guess, being pretty well cooled), I sat down to write to my dear Dick.”

For a young man, just beginning to feel the power of his own intellect, to acknowledge that any opinion of his can be wrong, is a proof

of rare humility and candour. Burke writes, in one of these early letters:—

“Let us not think, that because an opinion is ours, that therefore we are obliged to defend it against all reason and arguments that can be urged against us. It is no shame to own that we have been in the wrong,—it only shows that we are wiser now than formerly ; whereas, to persist obstinately in an opinion because it is ours, betrays that we gain nothing by the length of our lives, or at least that we are unwilling to do it.”

Twenty-six years later, a slight disagreement between the friends brings out, in a most characteristic manner, the simplicity of the Quaker, and the fiery but generous nature of the statesman. Shackleton has imprudently written, and allowed the publication of, an account of Burke's life and character. Burke's sensitive pride takes offence at his private affairs being thus laid open to the public, and he writes on the subject with considerable warmth. Shackleton answers,—

“MY DEAR FRIEND (if I may take the liberty still to call thee so),—I have received thy letter, written in the vexation of thy spirit, cutting and wounding me in the tenderest parts, and ripping open a sore which I thought was long ago healed !

“I know nothing in the world about the publication of that unfortunate paper but what thou tell'st me, nor who could be the publisher of it. I have used thee and thy family grossly ill. I acknowledge it as fully as I could. I am covered with grief, shame, and confusion for it. It was done in the simplicity of my heart. I mean the writing of it. The giving a copy of it I will not call indiscretion, but madness and folly. . . . I am sure I had no more thoughts of its spreading as it has done, nor of its ever being published, than I have of the publication of this letter. If what has been published varies at all from the copy which I sent thee, or if I can do anything by way of atonement or amendment, grant me this last favour of putting it in my power to do it. . . . I said thy letter cut and wounded

me ; it did indeed effectually. It was dictated by a perturbed mind ; it was calculated to punish and fret me, and it has obtained its end. Thy family, thy circumstances, thy conduct, thy bed, thy board, I am indirectly or directly charged with defaming and vilifying them all, not indeed as a false friend, but as a very foolish one. I could bear even all this, whether deserved or not, from thee. Thou art so used to lay about thee, and give and take no quarter with thy enemies, that it is unsafe for thy friends to be near thee. If there be any of the language of friendship in thy letter, it is only like oil to make the edge more keen. If the voice be anywhere like Jacob's, the hands are Esau's. Thou art grown 'a rough public man' sure enough. I say I could bear even this from thee (for I know both my own heart and thine), and if the affair lay only between ourselves there might sometime be an end of it. But thy mention of my interfering in thy domestic connections, and dragging the partner of thy bed and the softener of thy busy scenes of life into a newspaper, is wounding to the last degree. . . . I do in the sincerest and most earnest manner beg forgiveness of thy amiable companion—the bosom friend of my friend—for having written anything that could give her the most distant cause of uneasiness. As for any of her house being offended with me for taking the liberty of delineating thy character, be it known to them that not one of them all, nor, I believe, any man living, more zealously, more affectionately, more assiduously, seeks and desires the welfare of Ned Burke than I do ; and though in a way which neither he nor they may know much about, I am sure it is in sincerity and, I trust, not in vain. . . . However, this be assured of, that whether ever I see or hear from thee again, or whether this letter closes our correspondence for life, I am, with unabated, undiminished affection, thy sincere and faithful friend,

“ RICHARD SHACKLETON.”

Burke's answer to this shows that the "rough public man" had not outgrown the affectionate candour of his boyhood :—

"GREGORIES, *May 6th, 1770.*

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am now in the place from whence I was weak and blameable enough to write you a very angry, a very cruel, and, in all respects, a very improper letter. I will not be more dilatory in making all the amends in my power for the offence than I was in offending. So I write immediately on the receipt of your letter. But let my apology be, if it be one, that a spirit not naturally over-patient had about that time ten thousand things to mortify it, and this coming on the back of them did for a while put me beside myself. I assure you I am so concerned for what you have felt, that I could not bear to read through your description of it. A little trifling—mere imprudence at worst—did by no means deserve anything like a reproof, much less so harsh a one. As to my wife, you needed to make no apology at all to her ; she felt nothing but good wishes and friendship to you, and is by no means liable to those spurts of passion to which I am unfortunately but too subject. In truth the publication was soon forgot, produced no sort of effect, but was borne down the torrent of such matter, where one succeeds and carries away the other—*velut unda impellitur unda*. . . . Adieu, my dear Shackleton, forgive one who, if he is quick to offend, is ready to atone ; who loves, values, and esteems your abilities and your virtues ; and never can think of your early and continued friendship but as one of the chief blessings of his life. I am, my dear friend, once more truly and affectionately yours,

"EDMUND BURKE."

The last letters which we shall select from this correspondence, bring before us, in striking colours, the contrast in the daily lives of the two whose "early and continued friendship" Burke counted "as

one of the chief blessings of his life." At the time of the Gordon riots Burke writes:— *

" *Tuesday Night, June, 1780.*

" MY DEAR SHACKLETON,—I feel as I ought for your friendly solicitude about me and this family. Yesterday our furniture was entirely replaced, and my wife, for the first time since the beginning of this strange tumult, lay at home. During that week of havoc and destruction, we were under the roof of my worthy and valuable friend General Burgoyne, who did everything that could be done to make her situation comfortable to her. You will hear with satisfaction that she went through the whole with no small degree of fortitude. On Monday se'nnight, about nine o'clock, I received undoubted intelligence that, immediately after the destruction of Savile House, mine was to suffer the same fate. I instantly came hence (for Mrs. Burke and I were both abroad when we received this intelligence) and I removed such papers as I thought of most importance. In about an hour after, sixteen soldiers, without my knowledge or desire, took possession of the house. Government had, it seems, been apprised of the design, at the time when they were informed of the same ill-intention with regard to houses of so much more consideration than my little tenement; and they obligingly afforded me this protection, by means of which, under God, I think the house was saved. The next day I had my books and furniture removed, and the guards dismissed. I thought, in the then scarcity of troops, they might be better employed than in looking after my paltry remains. My wife being safely lodged, I spent part of the next day in the street, amidst this wild assembly, into whose hands I delivered myself, informing them who I was. Some of them were malignant and fanatical; but I think the far greater part of those whom

* 'Burke's Correspondence,' edited by Lord Fitzwilliam.

I saw were rather dissolute and unruly than very ill-disposed. I even found friends and well-wishers among the blue cockades. My friends had come to me to persuade me to go out of town, representing (from their kindness to me) the danger to be much greater than it was. But I thought, that if my liberty was once gone, and that I could not walk the streets of the town with tranquillity, I was in no condition to perform the duties for which I ought alone to wish for life. I therefore resolved they should see that, for one, I was neither to be forced nor intimidated from the straight line of what was right; and I returned, on foot, quite through the multitude to the House, which was covered by a strong body of horse and foot. I spoke my sentiments in such a way that I do not think I have ever, on any occasion, seemed to affect the House more forcibly. However, such was the confusion, that they could not be kept from coming to a resolution which I thought unbecoming and pusillanimous,—which was, that we should take that flagitious petition, which came from that base gang called ‘The Protestant Association,’ into our serious consideration. I am now glad that we did so; for if we had refused it, the subsequent ravages would have been charged upon our obstinacy. For four nights I kept watch at Lord Rockingham’s, or Sir George Savile’s, whose houses were garrisoned by a strong body of soldiers, together with numbers of true friends of the first rank, who were willing to share their danger. Savile-house, Rockingham-house, Devonshire-house, to be turned into garisons! *O tempora!* We have all served the country for several years—some of us for near thirty—with fidelity, labour, and affection; and we are obliged to put ourselves under military protection for our houses and our persons. The bell rings, and I have filled my time and paper with a mere account of this house; but it is what you will first inquire about, though of the least concern to others. God bless you;—remember me

to your worthy host. We can hardly think of leaving town ;—there is much to be done to repair the ruins of our country and its reputation, as well as to console the number of families ruined by wickedness, masking itself under the colour of religious zeal. Adieu, my dear friend,—our best regards to your daughter.

“Yours ever,

“EDM. BURKE.”

Five years later Richard Shackleton gives his friend the following picture of his peaceful life:—

“BALLITORE, *Twelfth Month 5th*, 1785.

“MY DEAR EDMUND,—We were all exceedingly glad to have it from under thy own hand that thou art in the land of the living, and that thy son was still upon the earth, and not under the waters. We shed among you those kind congratulations which we have received from our numerous friends on the occasion. Our Mary, who would have been chief mourner if the report had unhappily been true, takes the lead in expressing our common joy. As every one has his own way of uttering what he feels, she follows that which is most easy and natural to *her*. The effusions of her heart are herewith sent. Thy partiality to her little productions encourages her to present them to thee.

“We are all, thank Providence, very well, enjoying, I hope with gratitude, the domestic happiness and tranquillity which we are favoured with. *Deus nobis hæc otia fecit*. If at any time I grow tired of myself and my wife, I step over to my son and *his* wife. If they should be busy with their own concerns, and cannot afford time to chat with an idle old man, I am pleased with their diligent attention to their business, and turn to their children, who run up to me, climb atop of me, bring me down to their own level, and we are all children together—

joys which grandfathers only know. If, like a man of pleasure, I want variety in my enjoyments, I take my horse and go to other children and other grandchildren, and diversify my gratification in such mutual endearments. Such are my recreations and amusements—I hope not unbecoming a *man*. As to my engagements and occupations, I wish them to be such as are becoming a *Christian*. I often regret that I cannot have the pleasure of exchanging oftener sentiments with thee. Life will be at an end before we allow ourselves time to enjoy the best comforts of it. In the youthful spring of it we seemed to enjoy one another; the summer and autumn we gave to the world and to business in our respective lines. Now winter is coming on us, we should be social, warm, and comfortable. May you all be happy in yourselves, and one in another, and principally in the experience of the Divine blessing! Do let us hear now and then from thee. Say whether this gets to hand. I shall be glad to hear of my *young* friend Richard's safe return. How is my *old* friend Richard? He was indisposed when I was last in England.

“All our affectionate regards attend you all. My dear Edmund, farewell!

“RICHARD SHACKLETON.”

3. BALLITORE DURING THE REBELLION.

In 1791 Mary Shackleton married, or, as she quaintly expresses it,—
“I changed my name of Shackleton, and took that which belonged to my friend William Leadbeater.”

In the following year Richard Shackleton died of putrid fever. His daughter says:—

“The vacuum his removal left was never filled up; but we have reason to confess that he was taken in the right time, and

that the evening of his happy day, had it been protracted, would have been clouded with sorrow from various causes."

The clouds thus alluded to very soon began to gather. In 1793 Mrs. Leadbeater writes :—

"In this year we had many accounts of threatened disturbances in the County of Wexford and the Queen's County, occasioned by dissatisfaction at raising the militia, for now the flames of war between France and England blazed fiercely."

In the next year :—

"Great dissatisfaction now appeared on account of the embodying the militia. About a hundred men entered Ballitore early one morning, tendering an oath to all of their own class whom they met, that they should not join either militia or army, but be true to their own cause. Soon after this a party of soldiers was stationed here—unusual inhabitants in Ballitore, which hitherto had only beheld the military *en passant*."

Soon the Society of Friends began to prepare for war :—

"About this time (1796) a visit was paid, by appointment of the Monthly Meeting, to recommend such of our Society as had fire-arms or other instruments for the destruction of man, to destroy them. The only person amongst us who was in possession of such an instrument was Molly Houghton, who resigned to destruction her husband's old fowling-piece, and joined in the laugh raised at her expense."

In 1797 appearances are becoming still more threatening :—

"Soldiers now constituted part of the inhabitants of Ballitore ; the Cork Militia were stationed here. William Cooke, of Ballylea, about three miles hence, was attacked by a number

of men, who set fire to his house, and demanded his arms. The house was burned. The family went to Ballinglass, and we all saw with dread the approaching flames of discord."

Signs of the coming outburst grew more and more plain. Mysterious disappearances, nightly incursions of the "United Irishmen" in search of arms, and daily incursions of the authorities for the same purpose, were now common occurrences in once tranquil Ballitore. The Quakers' scruples as to its being consistent with their principles to apply for armed protection against these attacks, exposed them "to the imputation of being disaffected; and the provision they had for their families was rudely taken out of their houses for the yeomen." . . .

"Discontents arose between the army and yeomanry. Public notice was given that the nightly patrol should be withdrawn; to give opportunity for returning the arms of which the 'united men' had possessed themselves, and that, if not returned within a stated time, the whole neighbourhood should be burnt. . . . A large quantity of arms was left as directed, but broken into pieces, and thus rendered useless."

The smiths' tools were now seized and the smiths made prisoners:—

"Several of these were whipped publicly, to extort confessions about the pikes. The torture was excessive, and the victims were long in recovering, and in almost every case it was applied fruitlessly. Guards were placed at every entrance into the village, to prevent people from entering or leaving it. The village, once so peaceful, exhibited a scene of tumult and dismay, and the air rang with the shrieks of the sufferers, and the lamentations of those who beheld them suffer. These violent measures caused a great many pikes to be brought in; the street was lined with those who came to deliver up the instruments of death."

Imprisonments and executions followed, and at last the smouldering flames of disaffection burst out into open rebellion:—

“The morning of the 25th of the Fifth-month (May) orders came for the soldiers quartered here to march to Naas. A report was circulated that Naas gaol had been broken open—that Dublin was in arms, and so forth. All was uncertainty, except that something serious had happened, as the mail-coach had been stopped. The insurrection was to begin in Dublin, and the mail-coach not being suffered to leave the city was the signal for general revolt. This purpose being defeated by the vigilance of Government, the mail-coach had got to Naas before it was stopped, yet its detention there persuaded the people that the day was their own. They threw off the appearance of loyalty, and rose in avowed rebellion.”

As the Tyrone militia marched out of Ballitore the insurgents lay in ambush in Narraghmore wood, and a conflict ensued, in which “many on both sides fell, particularly among the undisciplined multitude.” Abandoned by its military so-called protectors, Ballitore became an easy prey to the insurgents, two or three hundred of whom now took possession of the town. Amongst details of brutal ferocity, our authoress relates some anecdotes very characteristic of the nationality of these rebels:—

“I saw from an upper window a crowd coming towards our kitchen-door; I went down and found many armed men, who desired to have refreshments, especially drink. I brought them milk, and was cutting a loaf of bread, when a little elderly man, called ‘the Canny,’ took it kindly out of my hand, and divided it himself, saying, ‘Be decent, boys, be decent.’ Encouraged by having found a friend, I ventured to tell them that so many armed men in the room frightened me. The warriors condescended to my fears. ‘We’ll be out in a shot,’ they replied, and in a minute the kitchen was empty.”

On another occasion:—

“A message was brought to me to request anything of a

green colour. I told him we could not join any party. 'What ! not the strongest ?' inquired one of the strangers. 'None at all ;' and though our parlour tables were covered with green cloth, they urged their request no further. . . . My dear mother, who was now in the stage of second childhood, in her unconsciousness of what was passing, had lost the timidity of her nature, mingled and conversed freely in her simplicity with all parties, and was treated by all with the greatest respect and tenderness, for, amid the darkness of the tumult, some rays of light gleamed forth, some countenances expressed humanity and a weariness of the work of death."

These, however, were exceptional cases ; generally the harmless and peace-loving neutrals were exposed to insult and injury from both sides :—

"A man afterwards came, with a horse-pistol in his hand, to take my husband. My brother had been previously taken, together with some of his guests. They were all to be brought to the camp in the hollow side of the hill at the east, and, when the soldiers came, they should be placed, the insurgents said, in the front of the battle, to stop a bullet, if they would not fire one. This man, not finding my husband below, and thinking he was concealed, ran upstairs, where our little children were in bed, with the huge pistol in his hand, swearing horribly that he would send the contents of it through his head if he did not go with him. I stood at the door, less terrified than I could have expected, and asked a young man who had accompanied the other, if they meant to kill us. 'To kill you ?' he repeated, in a tone expressive of surprise and sorrow at such a supposition. At length he prevailed on his angry companion to go away, threatening, as he went, that if the Quakers did not take up arms, their houses should be in flames."

In spite of such threats,—

“ Every one seemed to think that safety and security were to be found in my brother’s house. Thither the insurgents brought their prisoners, and thither, also, their own wounded and suffering comrades. It was an awful sight to behold in that large parlour such a mingled assembly of throbbing, anxious hearts—my brother’s own family, silent tears rolling down their faces, the wives of the loyal officers, the wives of the soldiers, the wives and daughters of the insurgents, the numerous guests, the prisoners, the trembling women—all dreading to see the door open, lest some new distress, some fresh announcement of horrors should enter. It was awful ; but every scene was now awful, and we knew not what a day might bring forth.”

The Leadbeaters’ house was threatened with an especial danger :—

“ All our houses were thronged with people seeking refreshment and repose, and threatening to take possession for the purpose of firing upon the soldiery when they should come. Ours seemed peculiarly adapted for such a purpose, being a corner house, and in a central situation ; so, believing its destruction was inevitable, I packed up in a small trunk such portable articles as I esteemed of most value, amongst which were some of my dear friends’ letters, and made packages of clothes for my husband, myself, and the little ones. I wore two pair of pockets, wishing to preserve as much as I could, though in my heart I had not much fear of an engagement, believing that the spirit which had animated the insurgents had evaporated.”

Mrs. Leadbeater was right. Various reverses had dispirited the rebels, and many of those in Ballitore were willing to make terms with the commander of the district, Colonel Campbell. Some, however, held out, and thus time was lost. Hostages were demanded, but were not sent at the appointed hour, and the military again took possession of Ballitore, declaring the inhabitants prisoners :—

“ This party of soldiers entered Ballitore exhausted by rage

and fatigue ; they brought cannon. Cannon in Ballitore ! The horse and foot had now met. Colonel Campbell was here in person, and many other officers. The insurgents had fled on the first alarm—the peaceable inhabitants remained. The trumpet was sounded, and the peaceable inhabitants were delivered up for two hours to the unbridled license of a furious soldiery ! How shall I continue the fearful narrative ?

“My mind never could arrange the transactions which were crowded into those two hours. Every house in the Barrow was in flames ; a row of houses opposite to the School was also set on fire ; none others were burnt immediately in the village, but a great many windows were broken, and when I heard this crash I thought it was cannon. We saw soldiers bending under loads of plunder. Captain Palmer came in to see me, and was truly solicitous about us, and insisted on giving us a ‘protection.’ Soldiers came in for milk ; some of their countenances were pale with anger, and they grinned at me, calling me names which I had never heard before.”

The gentle Quakeress has now to tell of murder after murder—the infuriated soldiery using little discrimination in their vengeance. Scenes of violence have become matters of course in the colony where once the arrival of a fresh school-boy, or a letter from Edmund Burke, were the most exciting events. The contrast is forcibly pointed by the following anecdote. The work of destruction was completed, and a retreat had been sounded. But a delay on the road caused some of the soldiers to return and renew the work of plunder :—

“The soldiers were overloaded with their spoils, and had to throw some away. A paper was discovered in a work-bag containing a list of names, which roused suspicion. Charles Coote [a former pupil of the Shackletons], on the watch, claimed to look at the paper, and quickly convinced the soldiers that their suspicions were unfounded ; yet his heart was wrung in secret, for this paper, in my handwriting, contained the characters and

reuses with which we had amused ourselves on one of our past happy evenings, with a list of explanations. He feared lest those who had returned might plunder and murder us; and the anguish of such an apprehension was quickened by the contrast with the convivial hour."

The storm, however, had spent its fury in Ballitore, and though it raged violently elsewhere, the Quaker colony "were sensible that a preserving Providence had restrained that wrath which threatened general destruction." After attending the Monthly Meeting at Carlow, which place was still in a disturbed state, Mrs. Leadbeater says:—

"We hastened back to Ballitore, where, once more, all wore the appearance of peace and security; where we walked out in the delightful evenings, unmolested by those counter-signs which had been so constantly called for during the last three months—undisturbed by the sight of licensed or unlicensed instruments of destruction—feeling for one another with that tender melancholy affection peculiar to fellow-sufferers. . . . Now that we rested once more, as it were, under our own vines and our own fig-trees, I felt as if Ballitore was itself again. In so narrow a circle as ours, a tender bond of affection becomes twined with the tie of neighbourhood, which adds exceedingly to its strength. We can imagine a state of society in which even the temporary absence of a neighbour causes a shade of gloom, and his return a ray of sunshine; where the sickness or misfortune of one is felt by sympathy through the whole body; where the shopkeepers live in unaffected harmony, and lend and borrow goods for the wants of their customers, instead of taking advantage of the scarcity of any particular article. All this we can imagine to be possible, and perhaps to be practised, in other places. In Ballitore it is the spirit of the place, and no wondering thought is ever bestowed upon it."

4. MARY LEADBEATER AND MELESINA TRENCH.

The character which such a state of society was calculated to foster is exhibited in these 'Annals,' but still more so in Mary Leadbeater's correspondence. Her letters to Mrs. Trench and to George Crabbe, show such a mixture of simplicity and intelligence—of curiosity and delicacy—of confidence and modesty—as is rarely to be met with. The friendship between Mrs. Leadbeater and Mrs. Trench—then Mrs. St. George—commenced under rather peculiar circumstances. After the rebellion, William Leadbeater had built an inn as a means of giving employment to the poor starving people. One night in April, 1802, this house was full to overflowing, and the landlord sent to ask the Leadbeaters if they could accommodate a lady for whom he had no room :—

"My husband went up at once for her, and brought her down in a carriage, when we found from her attendants that she was a person of consequence. . . . Her servants told us that the Ballybarney estate in the neighbourhood belonged to her, and that she had appointed her agent to meet her at Ballitore Inn, proposing to take her tenants from under the 'middlemen' to her own protection. . . . My heart entirely acquits me of having been influenced by what I had heard of her rank and fortune. Far more prepossessing than these were the soft lustre of her beautiful black eyes, and the sweetness of her fascinating smile. Her dress was simply elegant, and her fine dark hair dressed, according to the existing fashion, in rows of curls over one another in front, appeared to me as becoming as it was new. These particulars are not important to others, but to me they are inexpressibly dear, because they recall the first impression made on me by this most charming woman, who afterwards honoured me with her friendship."

Mrs. Leadbeater undertook to visit the tenants at Ballybarney during Mrs. St. George's absence, and a constant correspondence was thus commenced, and continued until Mrs. Leadbeater's death. Bally-

barney is naturally the principal subject of many of these letters, but politics, literature, and general gossip, are plentifully interspersed with the main topic. Mrs. Leadbeater's questions and remarks on such matters are extremely naïve and amusing. For example:—

“We were greatly gratified by thy mention of Madame de Staël. The Princess Charlotte affords still more gratification, especially as we had heard strange accounts of her temper. One improbable story was, that she carried on a correspondence with a young man; the relater thought it was the Prince of Orange, and that one of her ladies was picking the lock of her bureau—*by order*—to obtain his letters, when the princess entered the room, and snatching up one of the candles which were being borne before her, flung it at her governess. Also, we heard that she was accustomed to throw her books at the heads of her tutors, and disregard their instructions. So far for royalty.

“Canst thou tell me whether Lord Byron and Lord Strangford are one and the same person? and what character does Lord Byron bear? There is fine poetry in ‘Childe Harold,’ but heavy; like Beattie’s ‘Minstrel,’ neither narrative nor didactic, it causes some confusion in my head to comprehend it. Lord Byron seems very melancholy, and bewails his Thyrsa in beautiful numbers.”

In another letter:—

“We hear that the Princess Charlotte has cast off the fétters of her exalted rank, and asserts the privilege of her sex by refusing the husband chosen for her; and that the Prince and Princess of Wales were both at the theatre, and interchanged marks of respect! We hear also that the Emperor of Russia was at one of our meetings, and shook hands with the friends after meeting. His sister, the Duchess of Oldenburgh, had been there before, heard Stephen Grellet preach, and expressed

her satisfaction. Stephen was once a page to the beautiful Queen of France ; he left his native country for America at the time of the Revolution, joined the Society of Friends when there, and became a preacher. So thou seest tidings of the great world are wafted to our humble village.

"I have not met with 'The Story of Rimini,' but I do not like the story. There is something very revolting in the idea of a woman loving another man better than her husband, and this makes me look upon 'Zeluco' as a dangerous book. Hast thou not traced the source of the frequent divorces in the reading of the present day,—perverting the young, vain, uncultivated mind? Why, amongst the many songs which float on the gale and influence young minds so much with the double charm of poetry and melody, are there so very few in praise of married life? The passion of love, and the pleasures of the chase or the bottle, are not subjects calculated to improve the mind ; and what can be more pleasing among those than the simple joy at the husband's return expressed in 'There's nae luck about the house,' or than 'The land o' the leal,' and 'John Anderson, my jo!'"

In her answer to this letter Mrs. Trench exclaims :—

"How I admired the purity of mind which could dictate the words, 'There is something very revolting in the idea of a woman loving another man better than her husband!' You cannot think how this phrase, falling quite naturally from your pen, struck me as a sort of specimen of the golden age ; for almost every modern poem, every play, every novel, is so twisted and turned with the idea of a woman preferring another to him she has vowed to love, that it requires a noble mind, dipt in the finest dews of delicacy, to continue to feel it 'revolting' as well as guilty and unfortunate."

On receiving the news of the Princess Charlotte's death, Mrs. Leadbeater writes:—

“This national calamity is, like the shock of an earthquake, felt even in remote situations. In the morning the paper announced the illness of the princess; that evening my youngest daughter returned from Dublin, where she had been for three months, and we were so often disappointed of her returning, that I felt restless and agitated. The rap came to the door, it opened, and I saw my dear little girl; but at the same moment ‘The princess and her *son* are dead!’ struck upon my ear, and caused such a revulsion of feeling—such a repelling sensation when I was prepared only for joy—as I never felt before, and which seemed like choking till I could weep. My dear friend, there is scarcely any event of this kind but is aggravated by our own upbraidings or those of others. Indeed it struck me as surprising that no relative was watching over a young woman about to bring forth her first-born, and the expected heir to a kingdom; and I find such popular indignation was raised, that one fish-woman in Dublin scolding another, as the climax, exclaimed, ‘A bowl of nurse Griffiths’ gruel to you!’ Yet I cannot think—I cannot bear to think—there were any unfair doings. Indeed I pity the royal family from my heart, but most of all the widowed husband.”

Mrs. Leadbeater's correspondence with Crabbe, whom she only once met, is thus introduced in her ‘Annals’:—

“I was greatly delighted at receiving a letter from the poet Crabbe. I had long wished to know whether his characters were drawn from real persons, and I wrote to him on that subject. As I knew not his residence, I had sent my letter to Melesina Trench to forward. It reached the bard safely, and obtained for me a most friendly reply, which caused a sensation

throughout Ballitore. I was right in my conjecture that truth guided the pen of this admirable moral poet."

The letter thus referred to was as follows:—

5.—MARY LEADBEATER AND GEORGE CRABBE.

"BALLITORE, 7th of Eleventh Month, 1816.

"I believe it will surprise George Crabbe to receive a letter from an entire stranger, whom most probably he does not remember to have ever seen or heard of, but who cannot forget having met him at the house of Edmund Burke, Charles-street, James-square, in the year 1784. I was brought thither by my father, Richard Shackleton, the friend from childhood of Edmund Burke. My dear father told thee that Goldsmith's would now be the *deserted village*; perhaps thou dost not remember this compliment, but I remember the ingenuous modesty which disclaimed it. He admired 'The Village,' 'The Library,' and 'The Newspaper' exceedingly, and the delight with which he read them to his family could not but be acceptable to the author, had he known the sound judgment and the exquisite taste which that excellent man possessed. But he saw no more of the productions of the muse he admired, and whose originality was not the least charm. He is dead—and the friend whom he loved and honoured, and to whose character thou dost so much justice in the preface to 'The Parish Register,' is also gone to the house appointed for all living. A splendid constellation of poets arose in the literary horizon; I looked around for Crabbe. Why does not he, who shines as brightly as any of these, add his lustre? I had not long thought thus when, in an *Edinburgh Review*, I met with reflections similar to my own, which introduced 'The Parish Register.' Oh, it was like the sweet voice of a long-lost friend! and glad was I to hear that voice again in 'The Borough,'—still

more in 'The Tales,' which appear to me excelling all that preceded them. Every work is so much in unison with our own feelings, that a wish for information concerning them and their author is strongly excited.

"One of our friends, Dykes Alexander, who was in Ballitore in 1810, I think, said he was personally acquainted with thee, and spoke highly of thy character. I regretted I had not an opportunity of conversing with him on this subject, as perhaps he would have been able to decide arguments which have arisen, whether we owe to truth or to fiction that 'ever new delight' which thy poetry affords us. The characters, however singular some of them may be, are never unnatural, and the sentiments so true to domestic and social feelings, as well as to those of a higher nature, have the convincing power of reality over the mind, and I maintain that the pictures are drawn from life. To inquire whether this is the case is the excuse which I make to myself for writing this letter. I hope the excuse may be accepted by thee, for I greatly fear I have taken an unwarrantable liberty in making the inquiry. Though advanced in life, yet from an education of peculiar simplicity, and from never having been long absent from my retired native village, I am too little acquainted with decorum. If I have now transgressed the rules it prescribes, I appeal to the candour and liberality of thy mind to forgive a fault caused by a strong enthusiasm.

"I am thy sincere friend,

"MARY LEADBEATER.

"P.S.—Ballitore is the village in which Edmund Burke was educated by Abraham Shackleton, whose pupil he became in 1741, and from whose school he entered the College of Dublin in 1744. The school is still flourishing."

This letter produced the following answer from the good-natured poet :—

“TROWBRIDGE, 1st Dec. 1816.

“MARY LEADBEATER ! yes, indeed, I do well remember you ; not Leadbeater then, but a pretty demure lass, standing a timid auditor while her own verses were read by a kind friend, but a keen judge, Edmund Burke. And I have in my memory your father’s person and countenance, and you may be sure that my vanity retained the compliment which he paid me in the moment when he permitted his judgment to slip behind his good humour and desire of giving pleasure. Yes, I remember all who were present, and, of all, are not you and I the only survivors ? It was the day—was it not ?—when I introduced my wife to my friend ? And now both are gone ! and your father—and Richard Burke who was present (yet again I must ask, was he not ?)—and Mrs. Burke, all departed ! and so by and bye they will speak of us. But, in the mean time, it was good of you to write, oh, very, very good, and I do most sincerely and heartily thank you for it.

“But are you not your father’s own daughter ? Do you not flatter after his manner ? How do you know the mischief that you may do in the mind of a vain man, who is but too susceptible of praise, even while he is conscious of so much to be placed against it ? I am glad that you like my verses, though ; it would have mortified me very much if you had not, for you can judge as well as write. . . . Yours are really very admirable things, and the morality is as pure and useful as the literary merit is conspicuous. I am not sure that I have read all that you have given us, but what I have read has really that rare and almost undefinable quality, genius : that is to say, it seizes on the mind and commands attention, and on the heart, and compels its feelings. How could you imagine that I could be

otherwise than pleased—delighted rather—with your letter? And let me not omit the fact that I reply the instant I am at liberty, for I was enrobing myself for church. You are a child of simplicity, I know, and do not love robing; but you are a pupil of liberality, and look upon such things with a large mind, smiling in charity. Well, I was putting on the great black gown when my servant (you see I can be pompous, to write of gowns and servants with such familiarity)—when he brought me a letter, first directed, the words yet legible, to ‘George Crabbe’ at Belvoir Castle, and then by Lord Mendip to the ‘Rev.’ &c., at Trowbridge, and at Trowbridge I hope again to receive those welcome evidences of your remembrance, directed in all their simplicity, and written I trust in all sincerity. . . .

“There was a Suffolk family of Alexanders, one of whom you probably mean, and as he knew very little of me, I see no reason why he should not give me a good character: whether it was merited is another point, and that will depend upon our ideas of a good character. If it means, as it generally does, that I paid my debts, and was guilty of no glaring, world-defying immorality, why—yes!—I was so far a good character. But before the Searcher of Hearts, what are our good characters?

“But your motive for writing to me was your desire of knowing whether my men and women were really existing creatures, or beings of my own imagination? Nay, Mary Leadbeater! yours was a better motive; you thought that you should give pleasure by writing, and yet—you will think me very vain—you felt some pleasure yourself in renewing the acquaintance that commenced under such auspices! Am I not right? My heart tells me that I am, and hopes that you will confirm it. Be assured that I feel a very cordial esteem for the friend of my friend—the virtuous, the worthy character whom I am addressing.

“Yes, I will tell you readily about my creatures, whom I endeavour to paint as nearly as I could, and *dare*—for in some cases I dared not. This you will readily admit; besides, charity bade me be cautious. • Thus far you are correct; there is not one of whom I had not in my mind the original, but I was obliged in most cases to take them from their real situations, and in one or two instances even to change the sex, and in many the circumstances. The nearest to real life was the proud ostentatious man in ‘The Borough,’ who disguised a little mind by doing great things; yet others were approaching to reality at greater or less distances. Indeed, I do not know that I could paint merely from my own fancy; and there is no cause why I should. Is there not diversity sufficient in society? And who can go even but a little into the assemblies of our fellow-wanderers from the way of perfect rectitude, and not find characters so varied and so pointed that he need not call upon his imagination? . . .

“Know you ought of a family Allot?—the master of it Dean of Raphoe. There is a daughter there I am much disposed to love, and I believe she is not much indisposed to return my affection. Age has some convenience, you find: one can profess love, and feel it too, without that attendant apprehension which young people have. Now this, construed fairly, is merely a preface to the question, Will you permit me to love you? ‘Think of you I must, and of me I must entreat that you would not be unmindful.

“Thine, dear lady, very truly,

“GEORGE CRABBE.”

The receipt of this frank and genial letter was a cause of general rejoicing among the simple-minded community of Ballitore. Mary Leadbeater writes:—

“The report of my having received a letter from thee quickly

spread through Ballitore, and I was congratulated by my family, friends, and neighbours with unfeigned cordiality on this distinction ; for we partake in each other's joys and sorrows, being closely united by friendship and good-neighbourhood. We are mostly a colony of Quakers, and those who are not of our profession conform to our sober habits in their social intercourse with us. None of us are wealthy, all depending on industry for our humble competence, yet we find time to recreate ourselves with books, and, generally, see every publication which is proper for our perusal. Some of us profess not to relish poetry, yet thou hast contrived to charm us all, and sorry shall we be if thy next visit be to take leave ; therefore do not mar the pleasure we anticipate by a threat so alarming."

As the correspondence grows more familiar, Crabbe amuses himself by playing on the simplicity of his Quaker friend :—

"The world has not spoiled you, Mary, I do believe. Now it has me ;—I have been absorbed in its mighty vortex, and gone into the midst of its greatness, and joined in its festivities and frivolities, and been intimate with its children. You may like me very well, my kind friend, while the purifying water and your more effectual imagination are between us ; but come you to England, or let me be in Ireland, and place us together till mind becomes acquainted with mind—and then ! Ah, Mary Leadbeater ! you would have done with your friendship with me ! Child of simplicity and virtue, how can you let yourself be so deceived ? Am I not a great fat rector, living upon a mighty income, while my poor curate starves with six hungry children upon the scraps that fall from the luxurious table ? Do I not visit that horrible London, and enter into its abominable dissipations ? Am not I this day going to dine on venison and drink claret ? Have I not been at election dinners, and joined the Babel confusion of a town hall ? Child of

simplicity, am I fit to be a friend to you, and to the peaceful, mild, pure, and gentle people about you? One thing is true—I wish I had the qualification. But I am of the world, Mary.”

Mary Leadbeater accepts this account in all good faith; and, in her indulgent charity, makes excuses for the failings which her correspondent attributes to himself:—

“If the graceful figure which I saw in London, described by my father as ‘the youth with the *sour* name and the *sweet* countenance,’ has become somewhat corpulent, that is a consequence of good humour as well as good living; and why not partake of venison and claret with the moderation which such a mind will dictate? The sentiment expressed in an old song has sometimes occurred to me:—

‘Deceit may dress in linen gown,
And Truth in diamonds shine.’

Even in my own contracted sphere I have had opportunities of perceiving the virtues which, beaming from the zenith of wealth or rank, diffuse their influence to a wide extent.”

It is long before the confiding Quakeress discovers the trick that has been played upon her. The letter in which she announces this discovery is characterised by the most charming simplicity:—

“The increasing kindness of thy letters increases my grateful sensations; and when my simple efforts have obtained the approbation of the first moral poet of the time, and of his friend Sir Henry Englefield, is it surprising that I should be inflated thereby? Thou art too benevolent to intend to turn the brain of a poor old woman by commendation so valued, though thou hast practised on my credulity by a little deception; and from being always accustomed to matter of fact,

I generally take what I hear in a literal sense. A gentlewoman once assured me that the husband of her waiting-woman came to her house 'stark naked—naked as he was born.' I said, 'Oh dear!' and reflected with pity on the poor man's situation, certainly thinking him mad, as maniacs often throw away their clothes. My neighbour went on, 'His coat was so ragged, his hat so shabby!' and to my surprise I found the man was fully dressed, though in a garb ill-befitting the spouse of a lady's maid. Thus thou made me believe thou wert in portly case, by saying, 'Am I not a great fat rector?' We said it was the exuberance of good-humour that caused this increase of size—but a 'curate with six hungry children' staggered our belief. Now, we know thy son is thy curate, and that thou art light and active in form, with looks irradiated and accents modulated by genuine kindness of heart. Thus our friend John James Leckey describes thee; for I have seen his long letter to his mother on the subject of his visit, which, with his letter to me, has placed thee so before our view, that we all but see and hear thee, frequently going out and coming into the room, with a book in thy hand, and a smile and friendly expression on thy lips,—the benevolence which swam in thy eyes, and the cordial shake of both hands with which thou partedst with him,—and thou came out with him in the damp night, and sent thy servant with him to the inn, where he should not have lodged had there been room for him in thy own house."

Mrs. Leadbeater's warmth and largeness of heart always prompts her to put the best construction on the conduct of others. Crabbe had written to her:—

"Did you know R. L. Edgeworth? You know the *one* omission in all the works of his daughter, and her sentiments are said to be derived from him. Were they indeed unbelievers

in revealed religion? It is a questionable point in England with those who knew them only in their publications. Miss Edgeworth, as a moralist, is almost unexceptionable—I do not say entirely so; and if she has the misfortune to be without the comfort which the Gospel affords, she has performed a difficult task in preserving her morals unconnected with religion. If she believe, in any sense of the word, even the lowest, I perceive no reason for her reserve, since she needed not to have been so pointed as to have espoused any of the various denominations of Christians.”

Mary Leadbeater's answer to this is full of that charity which “thinketh no evil” :—

“ I do not believe that Richard Lovel Edgeworth and his admirable daughter were unbelievers in revealed religion, his life was so useful, his death so tranquil, and her character so excellent. Yet I do not vindicate the reserve thou mentions; I had rather it was otherwise, and that to good examples some precept had been added. Many feel a diffidence in attempting to handle the sacred subject of religion, and perhaps this diffidence is increased by seeing it frequently introduced in somewhat of a canting style; yet we have instances where ‘piety has found friends in the friends of science,’ where the truths of Christianity are inculcated with the graces of poetry, and even of wit, humour, and ‘legitimate satire; where it penetrates into the heart rather than obtrudes on the eye. When talents are thus devoted, what a spring of happiness rises in the breast, overflowing and comforting all around !”

To judge by the testimony of those who knew her best, Mary Leadbeater could speak from personal experience of the happy result of “talents thus devoted.” Those who know her through her ‘Annals’ and her Correspondence—even if only through the selections we have

given—will be able heartily to sympathise in Mrs. Trench's feelings when she records in her diary:—

“*June 30, 1826.*—Returned to town, and there received a letter from Miss Shackleton, with the sad news of my beloved Mrs. Leadbeater's death. Death how unexpected! I never thought of this word as connected with her. She was so serene, so happy, so active, leading a life so far from all that exposes to danger; she never had mentioned her illness but so slightly; she had so many benevolent and literary plans; she was so loved, and so sweetly loved again. Her instinctive fondness for me was a boon from Heaven which I valued not half enough while I possessed it. How little gratitude did I show for her unbounded kindness and partiality, not half so much as I felt! How many attentions to her were *to be* performed, how long were they deferred! how often wholly forgotten! Alas! I thought I should have her always!” *

* ‘Remains of the late Mrs. Richard Trench.’

CHAPTER V.

GARRARD'S LETTERS TO SIR THOMAS
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IT is a strange thing that some of the most gossiping, and, therefore, amusing, letters in our language should be found buried amidst a vast collection of public dispatches, contained in two bulky folios of the life of Lord Strafford. These letters are those of the Reverend George Garrard, which range from December, 1633, to January, 1639. They do not stand by themselves, but are arranged chronologically amidst the other correspondence of the great statesman. It is no easy matter, therefore, for the general reader to select the light matter from the heavy; and I have often thought that an enterprising publisher might produce a capital volume of the letters of one who, in the days before journalism, represented "Our London Correspondent," as he now frequently figures in the columns of a provincial newspaper. Meanwhile, the following imperfect selection will give some notion of the mode in which a very clever observer proposed to amuse the leisure hours, few and far between, of the ambitious politician whose "*thorough*" brought upon him the vengeance of a great party, who were too strong even for his daring resolution.

In January, 1631, Sir Thomas Wentworth was appointed Lord-Deputy of Ireland. The first letter is dated December 6th, 1633. Mr. Garrard thus commences the correspondence with a brief account of himself. Of the earlier history of the reverend courtier we have no distinct traces.

MR. GARRARD TO THE LORD DEPUTY.

"*Dec. 6th, 1633.*

"MAY IT PLEASE YOUR LORDSHIP,—

"As soon as I began to settle in London—which constantly I have done almost twenty years, about Allhallentide—I made queries about your Lordship, and was beholden to my

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worthy friend and old acquaintance Sir John Borlase, who went with you, and then came lately from you, who spoke most honourably of your Lordship, and then told me of your well-being. His discourse joyed me not a little. For, since I had the honour first to know your Lordship, your great abilities to serve God, your king and country, made me love and truly affect you, which, although I never told you until now in this letter, yet long since they made a deep impression in me, and I shall be ready to do your Lordship the best service in my power, either this way of writing, or any other way that you shall command; proem longer I'll use, not, but fall roundly to relate things done here."

* * * * *

"If these kind of scribblings may be of any use to you, which I write as fast as my pen can go, without either order or much meditation to form them, you may command me, who truly honours and loves you, to continue this service to your Lordship. So wishing you all happiness, and the Spirit of God to direct you aright in all your actions, I am," &c.

After a month had passed, during which Mr. Garrard had received some intimation that his correspondence was agreeable, he writes as follows:—

"Jan. 9th, 1633.

"I'll end, fearing I have now, at the month's end, run into the same error which I condemned in old Sir George Moore in time of Parliament, who, as your Lordship may remember, would about eleven of the clock rise up, and make repetition of all that had been spoken that day. Do not I the like in writing to your Lordship nothing but what, by more able pens, you have heard already? Pardon it, howsoever, since you invited me to do you this service, and that it comes from him who is truly," &c.

Although the Rev. J. Garrard, in his communication to the Lord-Deputy, wisely abstains from any details of the larger political movements of the day, we may collect from these "straws,"—which, as Selden says of libels, "being thrown up show which way the wind blows,"—that very troublesome times were at hand. In 1633 and 1634 we find the following significant passages :—

" Dec. 6th, 1633.

"One Bowyer, a lying, shameless fellow, was brought *ore tenus* into the Star Chamber for abusing the Archbishop of Canterbury with horrible falsities, no truth, nor shadow of truth in them ; his fine 3000*l.*, and to stand in the pillory in three places, Reading the last place, where he published them first, and there to lose his ears, and to return to perpetual imprisonment in Bridewell."

" June 3rd, 1634.

"No mercy shewed to Prynne ; he stood in the pillory, and lost his first ear in a pillory in the Palace at Westminster in full Term, his other in Cheapside, where, while he stood, his volumes were burnt under his nose, which had almost suffocated him."

" June 20th, 1634.

"Mr. Prynne, prisoner in the Tower, who hath got his ears sewed on, that they grow again as before to his head, is relapsed into new errors. He writ a very scandalous letter to my Lord of Canterbury, abusing him very much, and others of the lords, his judges. The Archbishop sent it to Mr. Noy, who sent for him, taking first a true copy of his letter, witnessed ; then showed him his own copy, which, after he had read, he tore into many pieces. He was for this brought to the lords, whence order is given to make him close prisoner, and to bar him of pen and ink, and further order to Mr. Attorney to put in a new Bill against him."

A few years later, we discover that even the Court Fool was not secure, in his vocation, from the jealous apprehensions of men who regarded the learning of the Puritan and the folly of the Buffoon as offences equally to be put down:—

“ Archy is fallen into a great misfortune ; a fool he would be, but a foul-mouthed knave he hath proved himself. Being in a tavern in Westminster, drunk, he saith himself, he was speaking of the Scottish business, he fell a railing on my Lord of Canterbury, said he was a monk, a rogue, and a traitor. Of this his Grace complained at Council, the King being present ; it was ordered he should be carried to the porter’s lodge, his coat pulled over his ears, and kicked out of the Court, never to enter within the gates, and to be called into the Star-Chamber. The first part is done, but my Lord of Canterbury hath interceded to the King, that there it should end. There is a new fool in his place, Muckle John, but he will ne’er be so rich, for he cannot abide money.”

The politicians of the decade which preceded the great civil war were not more solicitous to put down the manifestations of civil and religious liberty, than to drill society into a regimental march, that should not go too fast for their regulating principle. Much of the expense of the Court was sustained by monopolies ; but even when there was no profit to be derived from intermeddling, official persons were always ready to prescribe some remedy for evils worse than the disease and some interference with the most harmless proceedings of the commonalty. We subjoin a few illustrations under several heads :—

EXPORT OF COAL.

“ *April 1st, 1634.*

“ My Lords of Dorset and Holland have obtained a beneficial suit of the King, worth better than 1000*l.* a year apiece to them, for sea-coal exported to Dunkirk and other places in the late Arch-Duchess’s country. They found so great a benefit of our coal, which they took by way of prize in the late differ-

ence betwixt us and Spain, that they are contented to give four shillings upon the chaldron to have them brought to them."

SOAP.

"Here is much ado about the soap business. It is very doubtful whether, in the end, it will stand or no. For the present, it is strongly backed, and I hear a proclamation shall come forth to stop all mouths that speak against it. Commissioners have been appointed, the Lieutenant of the Tower, Sir William Becher, Sir Abraham Williams, Spiller, joined to the Lord Mayor, and some Aldermen. They have had two general washing-days at Guild-hall, most of them have given their verdict for the new soap to be the better; yet continual complaints rise up that it burns linen, scalds the laundress's fingers, wastes infinitely in keeping, being full of lime and tallow, which, if true, it is of that use in this kingdom, that it will not last. The Lord Mayor of London, by the King's commandment, received a shrewd reprimand for his pusillanimity in this business, being afraid of a troop of women that clamorously petitioned against the new soap; my Lord Privy Seal, his brother-in-law, was to give it him at the Board, and did very sharply."

Of the spontaneous movements of society for good or for evil, we have some amusing examples. The passion of gambling by means of Lotteries, seems on a sudden to have become one of the most notorious things upon which Mr. Garrard can write. Half a century later, every scheming tradesman had his lottery, of which mania the public advertisements of the time, especially those of 'The Tatler,' furnish very curious examples. Lotteries were an evil; but hackney coaches,—in spite of John Taylor, the Water Poet, who abominated a world that went upon wheels,—were a public good; and some judicious regulations as to fixed stands for these vehicles, were the commencement of a system that developed into one of the most striking characteristics of modern London.

CARRIAGES AT PLAY-HOUSES.

"Jan. 9th, 1633.

"There hath been an Order of the Lords of the Council hung up in a Table near Paul's and the Black-Friars, to command all that resort to the play-house there to send away their coaches, and to disperse abroad in Paul's Churchyard, Carter Lane, the Conduit in Fleet Street and other places, and not to return to fetch their company, but they must trot afoot to find their coaches; 'twas kept very strictly for two or three weeks, but now I think it is disordered again."

LOTTERIES.

"Oct. 3rd, 1635.

"I told your Lordship of a lottery set up in Smithfield for the advancement of a water-work undertaken by Mr. Gage; in twelve days it was drawn dry, every prize gotten by some one or other; the people were so mad of it, no lotteries having been in London for these many years past, that they flocked from all parts of the City. A broker in Long Lane had in those twelve days it stood there 360 clocks pawned to him, all which money was thrown into the lottery. They have gained 4000*l.* clear by it, and now, having provided new prizes, they have set it up in the Borough of Southwark."

HACKNEY COACHES.

"I cannot omit to mention any new thing that comes up amongst us, though never so trivial. Here is one Captain Bailey; he hath been a sea-captain, but now lives on the land, about this city, where he tries experiments. He hath erected, according to his ability, some four hackney coaches, put his men in a livery, and appointed them to stand at the May-Pole in the Strand, giving them instructions at what rates to carry

men into several parts of the town, where all day they may be had. Other hackney men seeing this way, they flocked to the same place, and perform their journeys at the same rate, so that sometimes there is twenty of them together, which disperse up and down, that they and others are to be had everywhere, as watermen are to be had by the waterside. Everybody is much pleased with it. For, whereas before coaches could not be had but at great rates, now a man may have one much cheaper."

Mr. Garrard, although not very copious in his relations of the aspects of general society, is far more diffuse and minute when he enters the congenial atmosphere of Court and Fashion. It is by no means clear that he ever found admission into the Royal presence, or even into the sacred antechambers through which court favourites, as they passed, smiled or frowned upon a throng of suitors. It is clear, however, that the reverend correspondent of my Lord-Deputy knew a good deal of the inner life of those precincts, whether he acquired his knowledge from the actors in the comedy, or from the pages who waited upon their bidding.

The crowding of the gentry to London was a supposed evil which Charles I. endeavoured to put down as sedulously as his father had interdicted the approach of his countrymen to the southern capital. It is scarcely necessary to say that this regulating power was wholly inefficient. One paragraph will suffice to show how all ranks were to be perplexed with decrees utterly opposed to commercial freedom and the free action of men in matters that have no sort of connection with the decent order of society, the security of the state, or the revenues of the Crown.

" Jan. 9th, 1633.

" We have very plausible things done of late. The book called the ' Declaration of the King's,' for rectifying of taverns, ordinaries, bakers, ostelries, is newly come forth. I'll say no more of it—your agent here will send it your Lordship. All back doors to taverns on the Thames are commanded to be shut up, only the *Bear* at the bridge foot is exempted, by reason

of the passage to Greenwich. To encourage gentlemen to live more willingly in the country, all game fowl, as pheasants, partridges, ducks, as also hares, are by proclamation forbidden to be dressed or eaten in any inns, and butchers are forbidden to be graziers."

The courtiers were the chief frequenters of the bowling-green in the neighbourhood of Whitehall, where, according to Garrard, gaming and drinking were carried on to a frightful excess; but the original one of Spring Gardens became so notorious that it was put down, although powerful influence was used to maintain it. In the next year Spring Gardens was superseded by another, which was kindly provided by a servant of the Lord Chamberlain. It was set up in a field behind the mews. The change seems to have produced no alteration in the manners of its frequenters.

" June 3rd, 1634.

"The bowling in the Spring Gardens was, by the King's command, put down for one day, but, by the intercession of the Queen, it was reprieved for this year, but hereafter it shall be no common bowling-place. There was kept in it an ordinary of six shillings a meal (when the King's proclamation allows but two elsewhere), continual bibbing and drinking wine all day long under the trees, two or three quarrels every week. It was grown scandalous and insufferable; besides, my Lord Digby, being reprehended for striking in the King's garden, he answered, that he took it for a common bowling-place, where all paid money for their coming in."

" June 24th, 1635.

"Since the Spring-Garden was put down, we have, by a servant of the Lord Chamberlain's, a new Spring-Garden, erected in the fields behind the mews, where is built a fair house, and two bowling-greens made, to entertain gamesters and bowlers, at an excessive rate; for I believe it hath cost him above four

thousand pounds—a dear undertaking for a gentleman barber. My Lord Chamberlain much frequents that place, where they bowl great matches. There was an order yielded to by consent, that every man of what quality soever should sit down or stand by the banks; and the best obeyed, only old Pinchbeck was refractory. The Lord Chamberlain came civilly enough to him, and spake to him; he mumbled and did not obey, which made the Chamberlain gently with his hand move him toward the bank, and there he set down. Two days after he wrote him a strange letter, beginning it, ‘Sir, you may remember what counsel I gave you at Croydon, for which I have suffered ever since; King James could never abide me, and I lost my fortune with Prince Henry to do you service.’ His counsel was to strike Ramsay, and then they would break their fast on the Scots there, and sup upon them at London. In the end of his letter, he tells his Lordship that ‘now he had heaped a new disgrace upon him, which he desires God to give him patience to bear, until he were enabled for a revenge. So I rest your slave, as you have made me, J. P.’ The Earl-Marshal, seeing this letter, hath committed him to the Marshalsea, where he yet remains.”

In the matter of gambling, the Royal example was not very encouraging to the morality of the courtiers.

“*Jan. 9th, 1633.*

“I had almost forgot to tell your Lordship that the Dicing Night the King carried away in James Palmer’s hat 1850*l*. The Queen was his half, and brought him that good luck; she shared presently 900*l*.”

No one, however, who is acquainted with the state of the arts and of literature in the time of Charles I., can doubt that a high taste prevailed in the amusements of the Court. Ben Jonson’s masques, and the designs for scenery provided by Inigo Jones, tell us something of

a far higher character than senseless frivolity or gross dissipation. The notices by Garrard of the masques at Whitehall, give us the dates of several of these interesting performances.

“ Dec. 16th, 1637.

“ Here are two masks intended this winter ; the King is now in practising his, which shall be presented at Twelfth tide ; most of the young lords about the town, who are good dancers, attend his majesty in this business. The other the Queen makes at Shrovetide ; a new house being erected in the first court at Whitehall, which cost the King 2500*l.* only of deal boards, because the King will not have his pictures in the Banqueting House hurt with lights.”

“ Feb. 7th, 1638.

“ The French and Spanish Ambassadors were both at the King's Mask, but not received as ambassadors ; the French sat amongst the ladies, the Spanish in a box. It was performed on a Sunday night, the day after Twelfth-night, in very cold weather, so that the house was not filled according to expectation. The Act of Council to drive all men into the country, the coldness of the weather, the day *Sunday*, and the illness of the invention of the scenes, were given for causes why so small a company came to see it. My Lord Treasurer was there by command.”

“ Feb. 27th.

“ On Monday after Candlemas-day the gentlemen of the Inns of Court performed their Masque at Court. They were sixteen in number, who rode through the streets in four chariots, and two others to carry their pages and musicians, attended by an hundred gentlemen of great horses, as well clad as ever I saw any ; they far exceeded in bravery any masque that had formerly been presented by those societies, and performed the dancing part with much applause. In their company there was

one Mr. Read of Gray's Inn, whom all the women and some men cried up for as handsome a man as the Duke of Buckingham. They were well used at Court by the King and Queen, no disgust given them, only this one accident fell: Mr. May of Gray's Inn, a fine poet, he who translated Lucan, came athwart my Lord Chamberlain in the Banqueting House, and he broke his staff over his shoulders, not knowing who he was, the King present, who knew him, for he calls him his poet, and told the Chamberlain of it, who sent for him the next morning, and fairly excused himself to him and gave him fifty pounds in pieces. I believe he was the more indulgent for his name's sake. This riding show took so well, that both King and Queen desired to see it again, so that they invited themselves to supper at my Lord Mayor's within a week after, and the masquers came in a more glorious show with all the riders, which were increased twenty, to Merchant Taylors' Hall, and there performed it again. The Mayor of London, though a sick man, gave them entertainment beyond any in Scotland, or in the way thither; and the grave Aldermen would have presented a purse with two thousand pounds of gold to the Queen, but my Lord Chamberlain with a little sharpness decried the gift, as not a fitting present from such a body; so it was not given, but within two days they sent to the Queen a diamond which cost them four thousand pounds, which was well accepted."

The time of Charles I., which immediately preceded the total break-up of courtly splendour, was an era of magnificent display, that might in some degree vie with the palmy days of Louis XIV. There were courtiers who, in their ostentatious exhibition of personal pomp, might almost rival him who is described by Mr. Carlyle as "Heliogabalus Hay." An Installation of Knights of the Garter was one of the occasions which called forth this profusion, which, no doubt, like the elections of modern times, made a fearful rent in the private

means of great lords. Garrard presents us with two remarkable examples:—

“*May 1st, 1634.*”

“Our two elected Knights of the Garter, the Earls Danby and Morton, rode in great state through London to Windsor; the King, Queen, and Prince dining that day at my Lord Wimbledon's, and taking up their standing in his balcony. There was a secret vie who should go best attended, as formerly there was betwixt Banbury and Kelly, who best accompanied. But my Lord Danby carried it there; for he clothed fifty men in tissue doublets and scarlet hose, thick laced, twelve footmen, two coaches set out bravely, and all the ancient nobility of England, that were not of the Garter, rode with him, and many others Earls and Barons, but the Earl of Shrewsbury, who was sick. There rode with him the Marquis of Winchester,” etc. . . . “With my Lord Morton rode the Earls of Warwick and Devonshire,” etc., “some of the equerries, all the rest Scottish lords and gentlemen. That which added much to his show, all the Scottish Colonels that came with Oxenstern rode along too, and most of his company were furnished with the King's horses. At Windsor they were installed, and returned the next day to attend his Majesty on St. George's eve. The Feast here was kept with great solemnity, and fifteen were present. The Lord Treasurer could not attend, by reason of his indisposition of health, of which I will speak anon, but sent his excuse. No election, though one place empty, which, they say, is kept for the Prince. It was ordered in a Chapter, that the officers of the Garter, who at Windsor the last year eat in the same room with the King, hats on, shall hereafter never eat again in the same room. The Earl Marshal stood still for them, and said it was a dignity to the Order rather than any diminution. It suffered much debate, but it was carried by votes, for none concurred with him.”

“ *May 19th, 1635.*

“ My Lord of Northumberland was installed the 13th of this month at Windsor. Never subject of this kingdom rode better attended from his house than he did, nor performed the business more nobly or more sumptuously. The King, Queen, and Prince stood at my Lord Wimbleton's in the Strand, thirteen Earls and a Marquis rode with him, besides almost all the young nobility and many Barons. I must not forget my Lord Cottington, who was very rich in jewels and his feather, but the Spanish way, and a competent number of the gentry, near an hundred horse in all, besides his servants, who were fifty, costly and bravely clothed, beyond any that hath been seen before ; four pages, all Earls' sons, two of my Lord Chamberlain, one of my Lord Salisbury's, and the fourth my Lord of Leicester's ; twelve footmen ; two brave coaches, with four in livery to drive them. My Lord Clanrickard, his son, and my Lord Dunluce, were of our company (for I rode too), but not one of the Scottish nation ; which was the more observed, because many of our English did the last year that honour unto my Lord Morton. The Garter is grown a dear honour, few subjects will be able to follow this pattern.”

It was a natural circumstance, that the rivalry of the great—not indeed in matters political, but in vain struggles arising out of senseless vanities—should produce quarrels which it was difficult to settle without the effusion of blood. Garrard hears a distant uproar of such brawls, and never fails to recount them for the edification of my Lord-Deputy.

“ *Jan. 9th, 1633.*

“ My Lord Savile hath had an high and mighty petition put up against him to the Lords, by one Field, a very honest man as I hear, and of your Lordship's country, one much trusted by the old Savile, that was wont to be so angry. This young Lord is charged by him to have, by the persuasion of one

Shaw and Ollerton, gotten him to his house, whither when he came, he carried him alone into his study, shuts the door, putting the key in his pocket, goes to a drawer, whence he takes out a dagger, which he puts to his breast, and swears by a most fearful oath, that if he did not presently sign and seal that writing lying before him, he would kill him in the place. He, thus terrified, sealed it ; my Lord Savile then took a book, which he thinks to be a Bible, made him lay his hand thereon, and swear never to reveal it. This Field afterward having spoken of it, it comes to my Lord Savile's ears, who instantly puts a Bill into the Star-Chamber, where being in a strait, he had no way but by petition to implore the favour of the Lords, who have bid him put in a Cross Bill against the Lord Savile. I wish him good luck, because Sir Gervase Clifton commends him for an honest man, yet being face to face before the Council, they affirmed things point blank one to the other.

“ My Lord Chamberlain and his cousin my Lord Powis had this day at his table a more bitter and fouler falling out than was that in the King's Galleries betwixt him and old Savile. Passion so transported the Chamberlain that he said, See how this rascal, that cannot eat bread without me, useth me ; to which Powis made so sharp a reply that the whole table was forced to rise to keep them asunder. God forgive them both, and send them more patience, at least more patience in their tongues.”

“ *Nov. 10th, 1634.*

“ The Lord Morley's business also hath received an hearing in the Star-Chamber this term ; the charges against him are these, That in Court he should say to Sir George Theobalds, What a base rascal is this ! I am no companion for such a base fellow, such a dunghill rogue as thou art ; for challenging him to go out of the Court, saying, Thou base rascal, I will cut thy throat ; for punching him on the breast, and catching him

by the throat in that room, where their Majesties were entering. The Lord Morley's counsel confesseth the charge, saying, It was done in a passion (they might have more truly said in an high fit of drunkenness), so submitted to the King's mercy. The attorney pursues him fiercely, shows his learning, and brings his precedents, all which I omit. The censure begins, my Lord Cottington was not there. Judge Jones began, and all concurred in one sentence, but the two last; ten thousand pounds to the King; one thousand to Sir George Theobalds. But the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Lord Privy Seal, who sat that day in the absence of the Lord Keeper, fined him twenty thousand pounds, besides imprisonment in the Tower, where I leave him."

"Feb. 1638.

"Kilvert hath received a great affront, of which he hath by petition complained to the King. It was thus: supping one night in a tavern in Fleet Street, being to pass out, a coach somewhat hindered his passage; he spake somewhat to the coachman to remove his coach, which he not doing, he struck him once or twice; the coachman struck again, so they went together by the ears. Mr. Kilvert, incensed with this, asked who he waited on; he said, Mr. Chichley, who with others was above in the tavern. Kilvert gets a constable and some of the watch, up he comes into the room, asks for Mr. Chichley, complains to him of his coachman; he bid him take his course against him, he was a hackney-man, his to-day, Mr. Kilvert's to-morrow. One Newton cried out, Let us look what we say or do, for he will have us all in the Star-Chamber: Kilvert displeased with that, all being bare, clapt on his hat saying, he might be covered, for he was as good a gentleman as any there. No sooner were these words out of his mouth, but a lieutenant, one Blagge, a near kinsman of Sir Thomas Jermyn, soled him well by the ears, and drew him by the hair about

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the room. They were parted, and friends they must be made, wine was called for, and an health to the Bishop of Lincoln begun to him, which he pledged, he said, because he durst do no other ; he threatens them all with the Star-Chamber."

Amidst some profligacy and more folly, and a good deal of corruption in the court of Charles I., it is satisfactory to find a record of one man of rank, who neither insulted his equals, oppressed his inferiors, nor was bought to take part against the right. Of such a *rara avis* Garrard thus writes :—

DEATH OF AN HONEST COURTIER.

" May 19th, 1635.

"The late Treasurer hath gained also an high praise for the manner of his dying, which hath been often peeled into my ears ; which drew into my consideration the death of Samuel, who had been a great man in Israel ; and I would have our great men of these times die with his words in their mouths :— ' Behold, here I am, witness against me before the Lord, whose ox have I taken ? or whose ass have I taken ? Whom have I oppressed ? or of whose hands have I received any bribe to blind my eyes therewith ? And I will return it you.' Your Lordship knows what follows. When our men so die, no man shall praise them faster than I, or give way to their praises."

Although Mr. Garrard, as becomes a reverend correspondent, does not shrink from occasionally noticing the deaths of great men, he is more at home in pleasant narratives of courtship and marriage. He appears to spare no pains to penetrate the heart of such mysteries as form the staple of the novel-writer ; to trace the causes why true love does not always run smooth ; and, to speak plainly, when the cupidity of high contracting parties, is the obstacle to the happiness of the young people. His account of the delays of the marriage of my Lord Russell to my Lady Anne Carr, lets us into some of the secret history of two great families.

MARRIAGE OF LORD RUSSELL.

" April 5th, 1636.

"The King lately sent the Duke of Lenox to my Lord of Bedford, to move him to give way to the marriage between my Lord Russel and the Lady Anne Carr, daughter to the Earl of Somerset, which he should take well at his hands ; the love betwixt them hath been long taken notice of, though discreetly and closely carried ; for his father gave him, as I take it, leave and liberty to choose in any family but in that,—but marriages are made in Heaven."

" March 23rd, 1637.

"The marriage betwixt the Lord Russell and the Lady Anne Carr, a most fine lady, will now shortly—at Easter—be solemnized. My Lord of Bedford loves money a little too much, which, together with my Lord of Somerset's unexpected poverty, have been the cause of this long treaty,—not any diminution of the young parties' affection, who are all in a flame in love. My Lord of Somerset told the Lord Chamberlain, who hath been a mediator in this business, before his daughter, that one of them was to be undone if that marriage went on ; he chose rather to undo himself, than to make her unhappy, and hath kept his word. For he hath sold all he can make money of,—even his house which he lives in at Chiswick, with all his plate, jewels, and household stuff, to raise a portion of 12,000*l.*, which my Lord of Bedford is not content to accept. This lord pretends that he lent my Lord Goring 3000*l.* when he was in the Tower ; being in some straits about raising this portion, he hath sent to the Lord Goring and demanded it of him, who denies it lent, for he saith it was given for real services then done him, which the Duke of Buckingham could witness were he living. This hath made a great noise, and much siding in the business : my Lord Chamberlain most fierce to get it for

Somerset. I would conclude this discourse here, but that my Lord Conway, who was absent ten days from us to fetch up his wife, enjoined me to write this ensuing passage to your Lordship, which I told him one night coming from my Lord Northumberland's, if it pleaseth you, thank him for it. My Lord Chamberlain supping one night at Salisbury House, fell into discourse about this 3000*l.*, saying how due it was to my Lord of Somerset, and that Somerset would ask leave of the King to sue my Lord Goring, and he would recover it, for somewhat that he knew. This he spoke with much vehemency. My Lord Powys, being by, spake to moderate him, especially since it concerned my Lord Goring, who always had been his true and faithful friend. He replied, he loved my Lord Goring well, but he loved a truth better,—for one courtesy my Lord Goring had done him, he had requited with twenty. Powys said, that he did believe, further, that my Lord Goring was not able suddenly, if it were due, to pay such a sum, and asked him whether he would make himself a solicitor to get in Somerset's debts. That word solicitor heated his Lordship; he flew then out into higher passion, and swore deeply,—‘G—d damn me, I have seen a letter under my Lord Goring's hand, where he confesseth the debt: and it must be a great courtesy must deserve 3000*l.* It was a gift for a prince to give, not for a subject. Let my Lord Goring show wherein he did ever my Lord of Somerset a courtesy worth 300*l.* and he shall quit his 3000*l.*, for which he hath his letter to show.’ My Lady Salisbury says then, ‘If he had such a letter to show let him show it, and the business was at an end.’ That ‘if’ my Lord Chamberlain took worse from her than anything spoken before. Would she ‘If,’ when he had sworn he had seen it. Still she replied ‘If’; and she thought she might say it to the King, much more to him. She further told him, that in all disputes he must have his own will, but he should not have it of her,—he should not silence

her in her own house,—she would speak ! So rose up and went from him and the company into her chamber. But it must not rest so ; my Lady Vaux and my Lord Powys undertake his Lordship, and he being of an excellent good disposition, they bring him to a better temper, and to more reason ; which effected, in they go to my Lady Salisbury's chamber, who now was the angrier of the two,—there they made them friends. Powys made them kiss, *sic finita est fabula.*"

" July 24th, 1637.

" My Lord Russel is now at length married, and wonderful happy are they both in it, for they love exceedingly well one another."

A singular contrast to the protracted suit of Lord Russell, is the short courtship and marriage of the son of the Earl of Stirling to a rich heiress, who spoke her mind without any maiden coyness.

THE GRANDCHILD OF RICH PETER VANLOVE.

" Dec. 6th, 1637.

" A grandchild of Vanlove's—rich Peter Vanlove—was to be married to a son of Sir Thomas Read's—he who lay seven years in the Fleet, and spent but 18*l.* a week ;—he lives now at Brockett Hall, near Hatfield. Read hath estated upon this second son of his, 1500*l.* a year ; and a match was intended with Mrs. Vanlove, who had a portion of 4000*l.* and 400*l.* a year after the death of her father young Peter. Monday, the 11th of this month, they were to be married ; the day before, in the afternoon, she sends to speak with one Mr. Alexander, a third son of the Earl of Stirling, Secretary of Scotland here ; he comes, finds her at cards, Mr. Read sitting by her ; she whispers him in the ear, asking him if he had a coach (he was of her acquaintance before), he said yes ; she desired Mr. Read to play her game, and went to her chamber, Mr. Alexander going along with her. Being there, she told him that to satisfy

her friends she had given way to marry the gentleman he saw, but her affection was more to him ; if he were so to her, she would instantly go away with him in his coach and be married. So he carried her to Greenwich, where they were married by six that evening."

The rich citizen's daughter became, in a few years, the Countess of Stirling. There was a second son, Anthony, who died in September, 1637. The first son, William, became the King's Resident in Nova Scotia. He had his father's passion for colonizing, and the fatigue and vexation which he experienced in his attempt to form a settlement in Long Island, brought on his death in May, 1638. He left a son by Margaret, a daughter of the Marquis of Douglas, who, upon the death of his grandfather in February, 1640, inherited the title, but lived to enjoy it only three months, as he died in the following May. Henry, his uncle, who carried off the rich Vanlove, then became Earl of Stirling; and the fortunate marriage placed him above the necessity of trafficking in baronetcies, or of working a patent for coining the base money which the people called "Turners."

The "London Correspondent" of a provincial paper does not look for a higher reward than a reasonable payment for his labours. The correspondent of the Lord-Deputy of Ireland, who was in a fair way of becoming the greatest subject in the realm, looked to something higher than a mere money gratuity. He is very frank in stating his wishes, and does not let the grass grow under his feet in his endeavour to realize them. He is at last successful. He becomes the head of Sir Thomas Sutton's foundation at the Charterhouse. There is nothing in his correspondence to indicate that he was of a harsh or grasping nature; and I have no doubt that, under his rule, the poor brethren were made as comfortable as the limited revenues of that period would allow, although the increased value of the estates has now made the Charterhouse a most desirable retreat for gentlemen of fallen fortunes.

THE REV. MR. GARRARD'S PREFERMENT.

"Feb. 1638.

"I want you, my Lord, in London at this time. This winter hath brought forth a candidate for the Mastership of the

Charterhouse, one Middleton, a minister lately come from Venice, where he was chaplain to Lord Fielding, my Lady Denbigh his great friend, and whom she can procure. It may perhaps endanger me, except my friends here stick the closer to me. If I fail in this I must be forced to become an humble suitor to your Lordship for some rectory in Ireland, *sine curâ*, or some deaconly preferment, lest it be said I took Orders in vain, and be laughed at by all the world. Sir Robert Dallington is near his end, hath not spoke this month, bedridden, almost now as infirm in body as before in his understanding. But of this more hereafter, when I can see through the business. There is one who could make it sure here, whom all England cannot make me believe will oppose me, because your Lordship, under your hand, hath assured me, even in this business to be well inclined to me. It is now near a year since I heard one word from your Lordship. It will be pleasing to me to hear I stand well in your favour, and that you have received my letters."

" *March 20th, 1637. (1638.)*

"Sir Robert Dallington hath been dead these three weeks, and your most humble servant, G. Garrard, is elected newly into his place, *ne una voce contradicente*, as Sir Edward Coke was wont to say. I followed your Lordship's counsel, made all the means I could everywhere; for, since this Middleton, a divine lately come from Venice, stood for it, some had both possessed his Majesty that, by the fundamental statutes of that place, a divine must be Master, and that I was altogether unfit for the place. The language of women,—at least of some body that knew me not at all. But these aspersions were, by some honourable friends of mine near the King, quickly wiped away before Dallington's death. My Lord of Northumberland, like a most noble friend, for me the lowest of his servants, appeared with much earnestness, engaged the Queen, who promised to

use her power with the King when the place should fall. He died—the King, at Newmarket; I instantly writ to that noble Lord, who got his Majesty moved, by the Earl of Holland, either to recommend me to the Governors, who had all a good opinion of me, or, according to the institution of the house, to leave it to a free election. This his Majesty did not refuse, but said he would not resolve until he came to London, for the Queen had writ to the King not to engage himself for any until he spake with her. Presently, upon his Majesty's return, my Lord's Grace of Canterbury recommended me to his Majesty; said he held not *that* a Churchman's place, had known me thirty-seven years, bred up in a strict college, a Master of Arts of thirty years' standing, and was then a good scholar,—he thought me a fit man for it. . . . My Lord Treasurer, my Lord Privy Seal, the Chamberlain, my Lord of Holland, and the rest, all moved for me, which the King hearing, left them to a free election, saying, if they had not a good Master, it was their own fault; so the next day I was elected. Coming to kiss his Majesty's hand the day after, and to give him thanks, he told me I was the happiest man in England, and bid me be a good Governor. I give your Lordship hearty thanks for what you have contributed towards my obtaining this place. . . . Thither, God willing, am I presently to retire, where I shall ever pray for your prosperity and happiness. Keep now your rectory, *sine curâ*, for your friends in Ireland, for I will not come thither."

CHAPTER VI.
MEMOIRS AND LETTERS OF
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THE famous author of 'The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire' was one of the most ingenuous of autobiographers, and also one of the best letter-writers. After his decease, his most intimate friend, Lord Sheffield,—to whom, as J. B. Holroyd, Esq., some of his most interesting letters are addressed,—undertook the publication of Gibbon's 'Miscellaneous Works.' To this collection Lord Sheffield prefixed an advertisement, in which he says:—"The melancholy duty of examining the papers of my deceased friend devolved upon me at a time when I was depressed by severe afflictions."

"In that state of mind I hesitated to undertake the task of selecting and preparing his manuscripts for the press. The warmth of my early and long attachment to Mr. Gibbon made me conscious of a partiality which it was not proper to indulge, especially in revising many of his juvenile and unfinished compositions. I had to guard, not only against a sentiment like my own, which I found extensively diffused, but also against the eagerness occasioned by a very general curiosity to see in print every literary relic, however imperfect, of so distinguished a writer."

The Memoirs, it appears, from the following statement by Lord Sheffield, were fragments of autobiography written at various epochs of Mr. Gibbon's life.

"The most important part consists of Memoirs of Mr. Gibbon's Life and Writings, a work which he seems to have projected with peculiar solicitude and attention, and of which he left six different sketches, all in his own handwriting. One of these sketches, the most diffuse and circumstantial so far as it proceeds, ends at the time when he quitted Oxford. Another at the year 1764, when he travelled to Italy. A third, at his father's death in 1770. A fourth, which he continued to March 1791, appears in the form of annals, much less detailed than the others. The two remaining sketches are still more imperfect. But it

is difficult to discover the order in which these several pieces were written. From all of them the following Memoirs have been carefully selected and put together."

Of the letters from which the editor of 'Half Hours with the best Letter-Writers' offers a selection, it may be necessary for him to say that he has not included any which have reference to the public events and party conflicts of the exciting period which includes the American War and the early days of the French Revolution. Those letters which relate to the literary labours of the great author, and which exhibit him not endeavouring to produce grand sentences or elaborate essays, have appeared to the present editor amongst the truest specimens of what letters should really be. They are marked by warm feelings of friendship, by playful allusions to the aspects of general society, and by descriptions of his own habit of life, which are far more agreeable than any pompous declamation. It is a remarkable and delightful characteristic of these letters, that they are, for the most part, very short, as compared with those of other famous letter-writers. It is satisfactory to know, that before the days of the penny-post, men of genius and learning were content to write epistles of which the brevity was more pregnant with meaning than tedious in minuteness.

To this Correspondence Lord Sheffield prefixes an introduction, in which he says:—"It has been sometimes thought necessary to offer to the public an apology for the publication of private letters. I have no scruple to say, that I publish these because they place my friend in an advantageous point of view. He might not perhaps have expected that all his letters should be printed; but I have no reason to believe that he would have been averse to the publication of any. If I had, they never would have been made public, however highly I might have conceived of their excellence."

There is an introduction by Mr. Gibbon to his Autobiography. Lord Sheffield says that the paragraph is found in only one of the posthumous papers; he further says, that it was a resolve on the part of the writer to publish these Memoirs during his own lifetime. The introductory passage is somewhat contradictory as to this intention, although it certainly has a tone of one who would not be wholly satisfied by a posthumous publication:—

“ In the fifty-second year of my age, after the completion of an arduous and successful work, I now propose to employ some moments of my leisure in reviewing the simple transactions of a private and literary life. Truth, naked and unblushing truth, the first virtue of more serious history, must be the sole recommendation of this personal narrative. The style shall be simple and familiar: but style is the image of character; and the habits of correct writing may produce, without labour or design, the appearance of art and study. My own amusement is my motive, and will be my reward; and if these sheets are communicated to some discreet and indulgent friends, they will be secreted from the public eye till the author shall be removed beyond the reach of criticism or ridicule.”

Mr. Gibbon commences his Memoir with an account of his family:—

“ My family is originally derived from the county of Kent. The southern district, which borders on Sussex and the sea, was formerly overspread with the great forest Anderida, and even now retains the denomination of the Weald, or Wood-land. In this district, and in the hundred and parish of Rolvenden, the Gibbons were possessed of lands in the year 1326; and the elder branch of the family, without much increase or diminution of property, still adheres to its native soil.”

Having given some anecdotes of the later times of his family, Mr. Gibbon comes to what more directly interests us of the present day—his early years and his education. From his account of himself during the period which ends when he quitted Oxford, I shall select a few passages, without troubling my readers with any connecting remarks:—

“ I was born at Putney, in the county of Surrey, the 27th of April, O.S. in the year 1737; the first child of the marriage of Edward Gibbon, Esq., and of Judith Porten. My lot might

have been that of a slave, a savage, or a peasant; nor can I reflect without pleasure on the bounty of nature, which cast my birth in a free and civilized country, in an age of science and philosophy, in a family of honourable rank, and decently endowed with the gifts of fortune. From my birth I have enjoyed the right of primogeniture; but I was succeeded by five brothers and one sister, all of whom were snatched away in their infancy.

“The death of a new-born child before that of its parents may seem an unnatural, but it is strictly a probable event: since of any given number the greater part are extinguished before their ninth year, before they possess the faculties of the mind or body. Without accusing the profuse waste or imperfect workmanship of nature, I shall only observe, that this unfavourable chance was multiplied against my infant existence. So feeble was my constitution, so precarious my life, that in the baptism of my brothers my father’s prudence successively repeated my christian name of Edward, that, in case of the departure of the eldest son, this patronymic appellation might be still perpetuated in the family.

— *Uno avulso non deficit alter.*

To preserve and to rear so frail a being, the most tender assiduity was scarcely sufficient; and my mother’s attention was somewhat diverted by her frequent pregnancies, by an exclusive passion for her husband, and by the dissipation of the world, in which his taste and authority obliged her to mingle. But the maternal office was supplied by my aunt, Mrs. Catherine Porten; at whose name I feel a tear of gratitude trickling down my cheek. A life of celibacy transferred her vacant affection to her sister’s first child; my weakness excited her pity; her attachment was fortified by labour and success; and if there be any, as I trust there are some, who

rejoice that I live, to that dear and excellent woman they must hold themselves indebted. Many anxious and solitary days did she consume in the patient trial of every mode of relief and amusement. Many wakeful nights did she sit by my bedside in trembling expectation that each hour would be my last. Of the various and frequent disorders of my childhood my own recollection is dark.

“ In my ninth year (January, 1746), in a lucid interval of comparative health, my father adopted the convenient and customary mode of English education ; and I was sent to Kingston-upon-Thames, to a school of about seventy boys, which was kept by Dr. Wooddeson and his assistants. Every time I have since passed over Putney common, I have always noticed the spot where my mother, as we drove along in the coach, admonished me that I was now going into the world, and must learn to think and act for myself. The expression may appear ludicrous, yet there is not in the course of life a more remarkable change than the removal of a child from the luxury and freedom of a wealthy house to the frugal diet and strict subordination of a school ; from the tenderness of parents, and obsequiousness of servants, to the rude familiarity of his equals, the insolent tyranny of his seniors, and the rod perhaps of a cruel and capricious pedagogue. Such hardships may steel the mind and body against the injuries of fortune ; but my timid reserve was astonished by the crowd and tumult of the school ; the want of strength and activity disqualified me for the sports of the play-field ; nor have I forgotten how often in the year forty-six I was reviled and buffeted for the sins of my Tory ancestors. By the common methods of discipline, at the expense of many tears and some blood, I purchased the knowledge of the Latin syntax : and not long since I was possessed of the dirty volumes of Phædrus and Cornelius Nepos, which I painfully construed and darkly understood.

“My studies were too frequently interrupted by sickness; and after a real or nominal residence at Kingston school for near two years, I was finally recalled (December, 1747) by my mother's death, which was occasioned, in her thirty-eighth year, by the consequences of her last labour. I was too young to feel the importance of my loss; and the image of her person and conversation is faintly imprinted in my memory. The affectionate heart of my aunt, Catherine Porten, bewailed a sister and a friend; but my poor father was inconsolable, and the transport of grief seemed to threaten his life or his reason. I can never forget the scene of our first interview some weeks after the fatal event; the awful silence, the room hung with black, the mid-day tapers; his sighs and tears; his praises of my mother, a saint in heaven; his solemn adjuration that I would cherish her memory and imitate her virtues; and the fervour with which he kissed and blessed me as the sole surviving pledge of their loves.

“As far back as I can remember, the house, near Putney-bridge and the church-yard, of my maternal grandfather, appears in the light of my proper and native home. It was there that I was allowed to spend the greatest part of my time, in sickness or in health, during my school vacations and my parents' residence in London, and finally, after my mother's death. Three months after that event, in the spring of 1748, the commercial ruin of her father, Mr. James Porten, was accomplished and declared. As his effects were not sold, nor the house evacuated till the Christmas following, I enjoyed during the whole year the society of my aunt, without much consciousness of her impending fate. I feel a melancholy pleasure in repeating my obligations to that excellent woman, Mrs. Catherine Porten, the true mother of my mind as well as of my health. Her natural good sense was improved by the perusal of the best books in the English language; and if her reason was some-

times clouded by prejudice, her sentiments were never disguised by hypocrisy or affectation. Her indulgent tenderness, the frankness of her temper, and my innate rising curiosity, soon removed all distance between us: like friends of an equal age, we freely conversed on every topic, familiar or abstruse; and it was her delight and reward to observe the first shoots of my young ideas. Pain and languor were often soothed by the voice of instruction and amusement; and to her kind lessons I ascribe my early and invincible love of reading, which I would not exchange for the treasures of India.

“The relics of my grandfather’s fortune afforded a bare annuity for his own maintenance; and his daughter, my worthy aunt, who had already passed her fortieth year, was left destitute. Her noble spirit scorned a life of obligation and dependence; and after revolving several schemes, she preferred the humble industry of keeping a boarding-house for Westminster School, where she laboriously earned a competence for her old age. This singular opportunity of blending the advantages of private and public education decided my father. After the Christmas holidays, in January, 1749, I accompanied Mrs. Porten to her new house in College Street, and was immediately entered in the school, of which Dr. John Nicoll was at that time head master. At first I was alone; but my aunt’s resolution was praised, her character was esteemed, her friends were numerous and active. In the course of some years she became the mother of forty or fifty boys, for the most part of family and fortune; and as her primitive habitation was too narrow, she built and occupied a spacious mansion in Dean’s Yard. I shall always be ready to join in the common opinion, that our public schools, which have produced so many eminent characters, are the best adapted to the genius and constitution of the English people. A boy of spirit may acquire a previous and practical experience of the world; and his playfellows may

be the future friends of his heart or his interest. In a free intercourse with his equals, the habits of truth, fortitude, and prudence, will insensibly be matured. Birth and riches are measured by the standard of personal merit; and the mimic scene of a rebellion has displayed, in their true colours, the ministers and patriots of the rising generation. Our seminaries of learning do not exactly correspond with the precept of a Spartan king, 'that the child should be instructed in the arts which will be useful to the man:' since a finished scholar may emerge from the head of Westminster or Eton, in total ignorance of the business and conversation of English gentlemen in the latter end of the eighteenth century. But these schools may assume the merit of teaching all that they pretend to teach, the Latin and Greek languages: they deposit in the hands of a disciple the keys of two valuable chests; nor can he complain, if they are afterwards lost or neglected by his own fault.

"As I approached my sixteenth year, nature displayed in my favour her mysterious energies: my constitution was fortified and fixed; and my disorders, instead of growing with my growth and strengthening with my strength, most wonderfully vanished. I have never possessed or abused the insolence of health: but since that time few persons have been more exempt from real or imaginary ills; and, till I am admonished by the gout, the reader will no more be troubled with the history of my bodily complaints. My unexpected recovery again encouraged the hope of my education; and I was placed at Esher, in Surrey, in the house of the reverend Mr. Philip Francis, in a pleasant spot which promised to unite the various benefits of air, exercise, and study (January, 1752). The translator of Horace might have taught me to relish the Latin poets, had not my friends discovered, in a few weeks, that he preferred the pleasures of London to the instruction of his pupils. My

father's perplexity at this time, rather than his prudence, was urged to embrace a singular and desperate measure. Without preparation or delay he carried me to Oxford; and I was matriculated in the university as a gentleman commoner of Magdalen college, before I had accomplished the fifteenth year of my age (April 3, 1752).

“ My own introduction to the university of Oxford forms a new era in my life; and at the distance of forty years I still remember my first emotions of surprise and satisfaction. In my fifteenth year I felt myself suddenly raised from a boy to a man; the persons whom I respected as my superiors in age and academical rank, entertained me with every mark of attention and civility; and my vanity was flattered by the velvet cap and silk gown which distinguish a gentleman-commoner from a plebeian student. A decent allowance, more money than a school-boy had ever seen, was at my own disposal; and I might command, among the tradesmen of Oxford, an indefinite and dangerous latitude of credit. A key was delivered into my hands, which gave me the free use of a numerous and learned library: my apartment consisted of three elegant and well-furnished rooms in the new building—a stately pile—of Magdalen college; and the adjacent walks, had they been frequented by Plato's disciples, might have been compared to the Attic shade on the banks of the Ilissus. Such was the fair prospect of my entrance (April 3, 1752) into the university of Oxford.

“ The long recess between the Trinity and Michaelmas terms empties the colleges of Oxford, as well as the courts of Westminster. I spent, at my father's house at Buriton in Hampshire, the two months of August and September. It is whimsical enough, that as soon as I left Magdalen college, my taste for books began to revive; but it was the same blind and boyish taste for the pursuit of exotic history. Unprovided with original

learning, unformed in the habits of thinking, unskilled in the arts of composition, I resolved—to write a book. The title of this first essay ‘The Age of Sesostris,’ was perhaps suggested by Voltaire’s ‘Age of Louis XIV.,’ which was new and popular; but my sole object was to investigate the probable date of the life and reign of the conqueror of Asia. I was then enamoured of Sir John Marsham’s ‘Canon Chronicus;’ an elaborate work, of whose merits and defects I was not yet qualified to judge. According to this specious though narrow plan, I settled my hero about the time of Solomon, in the tenth century before the Christian era.

“It might at least be expected, that an ecclesiastical school should inculcate the orthodox principles of religion. But our venerable mother had contrived to unite the opposite extremes of bigotry and indifference: an heretic, or unbeliever, was a monster in her eyes; but she was always, or often, or sometimes, remiss in the spiritual education of her own children. According to the statutes of the university, every student, before he is matriculated, must subscribe his assent to the thirty-nine articles of the church of England, which are signed by more than read, and read by more than believe them. My insufficient age excused me, however, from the immediate performance of this legal ceremony; and the vice-chancellor directed me to return as soon as I should have accomplished my fifteenth year; recommending me, in the meanwhile, to the instruction of my college. My college forgot to instruct: I forgot to return, and was myself forgotten by the first magistrate of the university. Without a single lecture, either public or private, either Christian or Protestant, without any academical subscription, without any episcopal confirmation, I was left by the dim light of my catechism to grope my way to the chapel and communion table, where I was admitted without a question how far, or by what means, I might be qualified to

receive the sacrament. Such almost incredible neglect was productive of the worst mischiefs. From my childhood I had been fond of religious disputation : my poor aunt has been often puzzled by the mysteries which she strove to believe ; nor had the elastic spring been totally broken by the weight of the atmosphere of Oxford. The blind activity of idleness urged me to advance without armour into the dangerous mazes of controversy ; and at the age of sixteen I bewildered myself into the errors of the church of Rome.

“ No sooner had I settled my new religion, than I resolved to profess myself a Catholic. Youth is sincere and impetuous ; and a momentary glow of enthusiasm had raised me above all temporal considerations.

“ By the keen Protestants, who would gladly retaliate the example of persecution, a clamour is raised of the increase of Popery : and they are always loud to declaim against the toleration of priests and Jesuits, who pervert so many of his majesty’s subjects from their religion and allegiance. On the present occasion the fall of one or more of her sons directed this clamour against the university ; and it was confidently affirmed that Popish missionaries were suffered, under various disguises, to introduce themselves into the colleges of Oxford. But justice obliges me to declare that as far as relates to myself, this assertion is false ; and that I never conversed with a priest, or even with a Papist, till my resolution from books was absolutely fixed.

“ An elaborate controversial epistle, approved by my Director, and addressed to my father, announced and justified the step which I had taken. My father was neither a bigot nor a philosopher ; but his affection deplored the loss of an only son, and his good sense was astonished at my strange departure from the religion of my country. In the first sally of passion he divulged a secret which prudence might have sup-

pressed, and the gates of Magdalen college were for ever shut against my return.

“After carrying me to Putney, to the house of his friend Mr. Mallet, by whose philosophy I was rather scandalized than reclaimed, it was necessary for my father to form a new plan of education, and to devise some method which, if possible, might effect the cure of my spiritual malady. After much debate it was determined, from the advice and personal experience of Mr. Eliot (now Lord Eliot), to fix me, during some years, at Lausanne in Switzerland. Mr. Frey, a Swiss gentleman of Basil, undertook the conduct of the journey: we left London the 19th of June, crossed the sea from Dover to Calais, travelled post through several provinces of France, by the direct road of St. Quentin, Rheims, Langres, and Besançon, and arrived the 30th of June at Lausanne, where I was immediately settled under the roof and tuition of Mr. Pavilliard, a Calvinist minister.”

The Autobiography contains the letters of Mr. Pavilliard to the father of Edward Gibbon, in which the judicious Calvinistic minister gives very full details of the course he pursued in his endeavour to reclaim his pupil from the errors he had imbibed. He had the satisfaction, in June 1754, of writing to the anxious father, —“I can venture to say he is no longer a member of the Church of Rome. Here we are at present.” The success of the Protestant instructor was complete at Christmas, 1754, when the youth received the sacrament in the church of Lausanne. He was then not quite eighteen years of age.

The Autobiography contains some instructive details of Edward Gibbon's course of study. In September, 1755, he says:—“During two years, if I forget some boyish excursions of a day or a week, I was fixed at Lausanne; but at the end of the third summer my father consented that I should make the tour of Switzerland with Pavilliard; and our short absence of one month (September 21st—October 20th, 1755) was a reward and relaxation of my assiduous studies.” During Mr. Gibbon's residence at Lausanne, he pursued his studies with his accustomed earnestness; corresponded with some men of literary emi-

nence; was introduced to Voltaire, and had the satisfaction of seeing "the most extraordinary man of the age" perform several characters in his own plays, which were acted by amateurs, during two seasons, at a country-house called Monrepos.

I now turn to the Letters of Gibbon, which incidentally recount the more important passages of his life, with a freshness that can scarcely be expected in autobiography. As these letters speak for themselves, comment would be superfluous.

The second portion of Gibbon's *Memoirs of his Life* ends in 1764. The letters which I now propose to give begin 1756, and end at 1763.

TO MRS. PORTEN.

"LAUSANNE, 1756.

"Dear Madam,—Fear no reproaches for your negligence, however great; for your silence, however long. I love you too well to make you any. Nothing, in my opinion, is so ridiculous as some kind of friends, wives, and lovers, who look on no crime as so heinous as the letting slip a post without writing. The charm of friendship is liberty; and he that would destroy the one, destroys, without designing it, the better half of the other. I compare friendship to charity, and letters to alms; the last signifies nothing without the first, and very often the first is very strong, although it does not shew itself by the other. It is not good-will which is wanting, it is only opportunities or means. However, one month—two months—three months—four months: I began not to be angry, but to be uneasy, for fear some accident had happened to you. I was often on the point of writing, but was always stopped by the hopes of hearing from you the next post. Besides, not to flatter you, your excuse is a very bad one. *You cannot entertain me by your letters.* I think I ought to know that better than you; and I assure you that one of *your plain sincere letters* entertains me more than the most polished one of Pliny or Cicero. 'Tis your heart speaks, and I look on your heart as much better in its way than either of their heads.

“The Englishman who lodges in our house is little sociable, at least for a reasonable person. My health always good, my studies pretty good. I understand Greek pretty well. I have even some kind of correspondence with several learned men, with Mr. Crevier of Paris, with Mr. Bretinger of Zurich, and with Mr. Allamand, a clergyman of this country, the most reasonable divine I ever knew. Do you never read now? I am a little piqued that you say nothing of Sir Charles Grandison; if you have not read it yet, read it for my sake. Perhaps Clarissa does not encourage you; but, in my opinion, it is much superior to Clarissa. When you have read it, read the letters of Madame de Sevigné to her daughter; I don’t doubt of their being translated into English. They are properly what I called, in the beginning of my letter, letters of the heart; the natural expressions of a mother’s fondness, regret at their being at a great distance from one another, and continual schemes to get together again. All that,—won’t it please you? There is scarce anything else in six whole volumes: and notwithstanding that, few people read them without finding them too short. Adieu: my paper is at an end. I don’t dare to tell you to write soon. Do it, however, if you can. Yours affectionately,

“E. GIBBON.”

TO HIS FATHER.

“1760.

“When I first returned to England, attentive to my future interest, you were so good as to give me hopes of a seat in Parliament. This seat, it was supposed, would be an expense of fifteen hundred pounds. This design flattered my vanity, as it might enable me to shine in so august an assembly. It flattered a nobler passion; I promised myself that by the means of this seat I might be one day the instrument of some good to my country. But I soon perceived how little a mere virtuous

inclination, unassisted by talents, could contribute towards that great end ; and a very short examination discovered to me, that those talents had not fallen to my lot. Do not, dear sir, impute this declaration to a false modesty, the meanest species of pride. Whatever else I may be ignorant of, I think I know myself, and shall always endeavour to mention my good qualities without vanity, and my defects without repugnance. I shall say nothing of the most intimate acquaintance with his country and language, so absolutely necessary to every senator. Since they may be acquired, to allege my deficiency in them would seem only the plea of laziness. But I shall say with great truth, that I never possessed that gift of speech, the first requisite of an orator, which use and labour may improve, but which nature alone can bestow. That my temper, quiet, retired, somewhat reserved, could neither acquire popularity, bear up against opposition, nor mix with ease in the crowds of public life. That even my genius (if you will allow me any) is better qualified for the deliberate compositions of the closet than for the extemporary discourses of the Parliament. An unexpected objection would disconcert me ; and as I am incapable of explaining to others what I do not thoroughly understand myself, I should be meditating while I ought to be answering. I even want necessary prejudices of party and of nation. In popular assemblies it is often necessary to inspire them ; and never orator inspired well a passion which he did not feel himself. Suppose me even mistaken in my own character : to set out with the repugnance such an opinion must produce, offers but an indifferent prospect. But I hear you say, it is not necessary that every man should enter into Parliament with such exalted hopes. It is to acquire a title the most glorious of any in a free country, and to employ the weight and consideration it gives in the service of one's friends. Such motives, though not glorious, yet are not dishonourable ;

and if we had a borough in our command, if you could bring me in without any great expense, or if our fortune enabled us to despise that expense, then indeed I should think them of the greatest strength. But with our private fortune, is it worth while to purchase, at so high a rate, a title honourable in itself, but which I must share with every fellow that can lay out fifteen hundred pounds? Besides, dear sir, a merchandise is of little value to the owner, when he is resolved not to sell it."

TO MRS. GIBBON, BURITON.

"PARIS, *Feb. 12th, 1763.*

"Paris is divided into two species, who have but little communication with each other. The one, who is chiefly connected with the men of letters, dine very much at home, are glad to see their friends, and pass the evenings, till about nine, in agreeable and rational conversation. The others are the most fashionable, sup in numerous parties, and always play, or rather game, both before and after supper. You may easily guess which sort suits me best. Indeed, madam, we may say what we please of the frivolity of the French; but I do assure you, that in a fortnight passed at Paris, I have heard more conversation worth remembering, and seen more men of letters among the people of fashion, than I had done in two or three winters in London."

I return to the Biography to extract one of its most interesting passages—the writer's description of his early love. If his deep attachment had not been discouraged by his father, the course of his life might have been altogether different.

"I hesitate, from the apprehension of ridicule, when I approach the delicate subject of my early love. By this word I do not mean the polite attention, the gallantry, without hope or design, which has originated in the spirit of chivalry, and is

interwoven with the texture of French manners. I understand by this passion the union of desire, friendship, and tenderness, which is inflamed by a single female, which prefers her to the rest of her sex, and which seeks her possession as the supreme or the sole happiness of our being. I need not blush at recollecting the object of my choice ; and though my love was disappointed of success, I am rather proud that I was once capable of feeling such a pure and exalted sentiment. The personal attractions of Mademoiselle Susan Curchod were embellished by the virtues and talents of the mind. Her fortune was humble, but her family was respectable. Her mother, a native of France, had preferred her religion to her country. The profession of her father did not extinguish the moderation and philosophy of his temper, and he lived content, with a small salary and laborious duty, in the obscure lot of minister of Crassy, in the mountains that separate the Pays de Vaud from the county of Burgundy. In the solitude of a sequestered village he bestowed a liberal and even learned education on his only daughter. She surpassed his hopes by her proficiency in the sciences and languages ; and in her short visits to some relations at Lausanne, the wit, the beauty, and erudition of Mademoiselle Curchod were the theme of universal applause. The report of such a prodigy awakened my curiosity ; I saw and loved. I found her learned without pedantry, lively in conversation, pure in sentiment, and elegant in manners ; and the first sudden emotion was fortified by the habits and knowledge of a more familiar acquaintance. She permitted me to make her two or three visits at her father's house. I passed some happy days there, in the mountains of Burgundy, and her parents honourably encouraged the connection. In a calm retirement the gay vanity of youth no longer fluttered in her bosom ; she listened to the voice of truth and passion ; and I might presume to hope that I had made some impression on

a virtuous heart. At Crassy and Lausanne I indulged my dream of felicity ; but on my return to England, I soon discovered that my father would not hear of this strange alliance, and that without his consent I was myself destitute and helpless. After a painful struggle I yielded to my fate : I sighed as a lover, I obeyed as a son ; my wound was insensibly healed by time, absence, and the habits of a new life. My cure was accelerated by a faithful report of the tranquillity and cheerfulness of the lady herself ; and my love subsided in friendship and esteem. The minister of Crassy soon afterwards died ; his stipend died with him ; his daughter retired to Geneva, where, by teaching young ladies, she earned a hard subsistence for herself and her mother ; but in her lowest distress she maintained a spotless reputation and a dignified behaviour. A rich banker of Paris, a citizen of Geneva, had the good fortune and good sense to discover and possess this inestimable treasure ; and in the capital of taste and luxury she resisted the temptations of wealth, as she had sustained the hardships of indigence. The genius of her husband has exalted him to the most conspicuous station in Europe. In every change of prosperity and disgrace he has reclined on the bosom of a faithful friend ; and Mademoiselle Curchod is now the wife of M. Necker, the minister, and perhaps the legislator, of the French monarchy."

The third portion of Gibbon's Autobiography ends at the year 1770, when he has to recount the death of his father. The father and the son appear to have possessed natures not altogether congenial, although the young man would seem rarely to have been wanting in respect and obedience. The closing years of the elder Gibbon were clouded by pecuniary difficulties, which seem to have hastened his end. The following is the son's narrative of the evil days which left him to struggle without paternal advice, but which also freed him from interference, generally affectionate but often injudicious.

“ The last indispensable condition, the freedom from debt, was wanting to my father’s felicity ; and the vanities of his youth were severely punished by the solicitude and sorrow of his declining age. The first mortgage, on my return from Lausanne (1758) had afforded him a partial and transient relief. The annual demand of interest and allowance was a heavy deduction from his income ; the militia was a source of expense ; the farm in his hands was not a profitable adventure ; he was loaded with the costs and damages of an obsolete lawsuit ; and each year multiplied the number, and exhausted the patience, of his creditors. Under these painful circumstances, I consented to an additional mortgage, to the sale of Putney, and to every sacrifice that could alleviate his distress. But he was no longer capable of a rational effort, and his reluctant delays postponed not the evils themselves, but the remedies of those evils—(*remedia malorum potius quam mala differebat*). The pangs of shame, tenderness, and self-reproach, incessantly preyed on his vitals ; his constitution was broken ; he lost his strength and his sight : the rapid progress of a dropsy admonished him of his end, and he sunk into the grave on the 10th of November, 1770, in the sixty-fourth year of his age. A family tradition insinuates that Mr. William Law had drawn his pupil in the light and inconstant character of *Flatus*, who is ever confident, and ever disappointed in the chace of happiness. But these constitutional failings were happily compensated by the virtues of the head and heart, by the warmest sentiments of honour and humanity. His graceful person, polite address, gentle manners, and unaffected cheerfulness, recommended him to the favour of every company ; and in the change of times and opinions, his liberal spirit had long since delivered him from the zeal and prejudice of a Tory education. I submitted to the order of nature ; and my grief was soothed

by the conscious satisfaction that I had discharged all the duties of filial piety."

The matter which I have extracted from Mr. Gibbon's *Autobiography* and *Letters* up to the thirty-third year of his age, embraces the period before he had attained the great literary distinction which was the result of his persevering adherence to a life of studious research. This portion has already extended to a length which will compel the completion of my subject in a second chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

MEMOIRS AND LETTERS OF EDWARD GIBBON.

Concluded from Chapter VI.

THE fourth portion of the Autobiography describes the course of his life during the two years which followed the death of his father. He resided partly on his estate at Buriton, and partly in London:—"The gratification of my desires (they were not immoderate) has been seldom disappointed by the want of money or credit; my pride was never insulted by the visit of an importunate tradesman; and my transient anxiety for the past or future has been dispelled by the studious or social occupation of the present hour." A brilliant future lay before him, which perhaps might afford less happiness than the first two years when he became his own master.

"I had now attained the first of earthly blessings, independence: I was the absolute master of my hours and actions: nor was I deceived in the hope that the establishment of my library in town would allow me to divide the day between study and society. Each year the circle of my acquaintance, the number of my dead and living companions, was enlarged. To a lover of books the shops and sales of London present irresistible temptations; and the manufacture of my history required a various and growing stock of materials. The militia, my travels, the House of Commons, the fame of an author, contributed to multiply my connections: I was chosen a member of the fashionable clubs; and, before I left England in 1783, there were few persons of any eminence in the literary or political world to whom I was a stranger."

At the general election of 1774 Mr. Gibbon was returned to Parliament for the borough of Liskeard. His letters of this period exhibit him in his political and literary aspirations.

MR. GIBBON TO J. HOLROYD, ESQ.

“ January 29th, 1774.

“I am now getting acquainted with authors, managers, &c., good company to know, but not to live with. Yesterday I dined at the British coffee-house with Garrick, Coleman, Goldsmith, Macpherson, John Hume, &c. I am at this moment come from Coleman’s ‘Man of Business.’ We dined at the Shakspeare, and went in a body to support it. Between friends, though we got a verdict for our client, his cause was but a bad one. It is a very confused miscellany of several plays and tales ; sets out brilliantly enough, but as we advance the plot grows thicker, the wit thinner, till the lucky fall of the curtain preserves us from total chaos.”

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

“ April 21st, 1774.

“Dear Holroyd,—I begin to flag, and though you already reproach me as a bad correspondent, I much fear that I shall every week become a more hardened sinner. Besides the occasional obstructions of Clarke and Deyverdun, I must entreat you to consider, with your usual candour, 1. The aversion to epistolary conversation, which it has pleased the dæmon to implant in my nature. 2. That I am a very fine gentleman, a subscriber to the masquerade, where you and my lady ought to come, and am now writing at Boodle’s, in a fine velvet coat, with ruffles of my lady’s choosing, &c. 3. That the aforesaid fine gentleman is likewise an historian ; and in truth, when I am writing a page, I do not only think it a sufficient reason for delay, but even consider myself as writing for

you, and that, much more to the purpose than if I were sending you the tittle tattle of the town, of which indeed there is none stirring. With regard to America, the minister seems moderate, and the house obedient."

PARLIAMENT.

"Sept. 10th, 1774.

"Yesterday morning, about half an hour after seven, as I was destroying an army of barbarians, I heard a double rap at the door, and my friend Mr. Eliot was soon introduced. After some idle conversation he told me that, if I was desirous of being in Parliament, he had an *independent* seat very much at my service. . . . This is a fine prospect opening upon me; and if next spring I should take my seat, and publish my book, it will be a very memorable era in my life. I am ignorant whether my borough will be Liskeard or St. Germain's. You despise boroughs, and fly at nobler game. Adieu."

"BOODLE'S, Jan. 31st, 1775.

"If my confidence was equal to my eloquence, and my eloquence to my knowledge, perhaps I might make no very intolerable speaker. At all events, I fancy I shall try to expose myself.

'Semper ego auditor tantum? nunquamne reponam?'

For my own part, I am more and more convinced that we have both the right and the power on our side, and that, though the effort may be accompanied with some melancholy circumstances, we are now arrived at the decisive moment of preserving or of losing for ever, both our trade and empire."

EDWARD GIBBON TO MRS. GIBBON.

"March 30th, 1775.

"Dear Madam,—I hardly know how to take up the pen. I talked in my last of two or three posts, and I am almost

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ashamed to calculate how many have elapsed. I will endeavour for the future to be less scandalous. Only believe that my heart is innocent of the laziness of my hand. I do not mean to have recourse to the stale and absurd excuse of business, though I have really had a very considerable hurry of new parliamentary business: one day, for instance, of seventeen hours, from ten in the morning till between three and four the next morning. It is, upon the whole, an agreeable improvement in my life, and forms just the mixture of business, of study, and of society, which I always imagined I should, and now find I do like. Whether the house of Commons may ever prove of benefit to myself or country, is another question. As yet, I have been mute. In the course of our American affairs, I have sometimes had a wish, to speak, but though I felt tolerably prepared as to the matter, I dreaded exposing myself in the manner, and remained in my seat safe, but inglorious. Upon the whole (though I still believe I shall try), I doubt whether Nature—not that in some instances I am ungrateful—has given me the talents of an orator, and I feel that I came into Parliament much too late to exert them.”

TO J. B. HOLROYD, ESQ.

“ BENTINCK STREET, Aug. 1st, 1775.

“ Your apprehensions of a precipitate work, &c., are perfectly groundless. I should be much more addicted to a contrary extreme. The *head* is now printing: true, but it was written last year and the year before. The first chapter has been composed, *de nouveau, three times*; the second *twice*, and all the others have undergone reviews, corrections, &c. As to the tail, it is perfectly formed and digested, and (were I so much given to self-content and haste) it is almost all written. The ecclesiastical part, for instance, is written out in fourteen sheets, which I mean to *refondre* from beginning to end. As to the friendly

critic, it is very difficult to find one who has leisure, candour, freedom, and knowledge sufficient. However, Batt and Deyverdun have read and observed. After all, the public is the best critic. I print no more than five hundred copies of the first edition; and the second (as it happens frequently to my betters) may receive many improvements."

TO MRS. GIBBON.

" LONDON, Aug. 1775.

" Dear Madam,—Will you accept my present literary business as an excuse for my not writing? I think you will be in the wrong if you do, since I was just as idle before. At all events, however, it is better to say three words than to be totally a dumb dog. *Apropos* of dog, but not of dumb: your Pomeranian is the comfort of my life: pretty, impertinent, fantastical, all that a young lady of fashion ought to be. I flatter myself that our passion is reciprocal. I am just at present engaged in a great historical work—no less than a History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire; with the first volume of which I may very possibly oppress the public next winter. It would require some pages to give a more particular idea of it; but I shall only say in general, that the subject is curious, and never yet treated as it deserves; and that during some years it has been in my thoughts, and even under my pen. Should the attempt fail, it must be by the fault of the execution."

In 1775 the first volume of Mr. Gibbon's great work was given to the public. Of this event, which truly constituted an era in our literature, he thus writes in the Autobiography:—

" The volume of my history, which had been somewhat delayed by the novelty and tumult of a first session, was now ready for the press. After the perilous adventure had been

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declined by my friend Mr. Elmsly, I agreed upon easy terms with Mr. Thomas Cadell, a respectable bookseller, and Mr. William Strahan, an eminent printer; and they undertook the care and risk of the publication, which derived more credit from the name of the shop than from that of the author. The last revisal of the proofs was submitted to my vigilance; and many blemishes of style, which had been invisible in the manuscript, were discovered and corrected in the printed sheet. So moderate were our hopes, that the original impression had been stinted to five hundred, till the number was doubled by the prophetic taste of Mr. Strahan. During this awful interval I was neither elated by the ambition of fame, nor depressed by the apprehension of contempt. My diligence and accuracy were attested by my own conscience. History is the most popular species of writing, since it can adapt itself to the highest or the lowest capacity. I had chosen an illustrious subject. Rome is familiar to the schoolboy and the statesman; and my narrative was deduced from the last period of classical reading. I had likewise flattered myself that an age of light and liberty would receive, without scandal, an inquiry into the human *causes* of the progress and establishment of Christianity. I am at a loss how to describe the success of the work, without betraying the vanity of the writer."

In my little volume, '*Shadows of the Old Booksellers*,' I have given an account of the honourable dealings of Cadell and Strahan with the author whose work was destined to become their most valuable copyright. The writer and the publishers both felt their interests were identical. On the one part there were no extravagant demands,—on the other no meannesses, which too often make such a partnership in profits disappointing and delusive.

The correspondence of Gibbon, after the publication of his first volume, contains many complimentary letters from distinguished persons. The following letters, that passed between Mr. Gibbon and Dr. Watson, the Bishop of Llandaff, are honourable to both parties.

MR. GIBBON TO THE REV. DR. WATSON (now Bishop of Llandaff).

“ BENTINCK STREET, *Nov. 2nd*, 1776.

“ Mr. Gibbon takes the earliest opportunity of presenting his compliments and thanks to Dr. Watson, and of expressing his sense of the liberal treatment which he has received from so candid an adversary. Mr. Gibbon entirely coincides in opinion with Dr. Watson, that as their different sentiments, on a very important period of history, are now submitted to the public, they both may employ their time in a manner much more useful, as well as agreeable, than they could possibly do by exhibiting a single combat in the amphitheatre of controversy. Mr. Gibbon is therefore determined to resist the temptation of justifying, in a professed reply, any passages of his *History*, which might perhaps be easily cleared from censure and misapprehension ; but he still reserves to himself the privilege of inserting, in a future edition, some occasional remarks and explanations of his meaning. If any calls of pleasure or business should bring Dr. Watson to town, Mr. Gibbon would think himself happy in being permitted to solicit the honour of his acquaintance.”

DR. WATSON TO MR. GIBBON.

“ CAMBRIDGE, *Jan. 14th*, 1779.

“ Sir,—It will give me the greatest pleasure to have an opportunity of becoming better acquainted with Mr. Gibbon. I beg he would accept my sincere thanks for the too favourable manner in which he has spoken of a performance which derives its chief merit from the elegance and importance of the work it attempts to oppose. I have no hope of a future existence, except that which is grounded on the truth of Christianity. I wish not to be deprived of this hope ; but I should be an apostate from the mild principle of the religion I profess, if

I could be actuated with the least animosity against those who do not think with me upon this, of all others, the most important subject. I beg your pardon for this declaration of my belief; but my temper is naturally open, and it ought assuredly to be without disguise to a man whom I wish no longer to look upon as an antagonist, but as a friend. I have the honour to be, with every sentiment of respect, your obliged servant,

“RICHARD WATSON.”

In 1780 Mr. Gibbon's constant friend, Mr. Holroyd, was created Lord Sheffield. Their personal intimacy was interrupted by the determination of the historian again to take up his residence in Lausanne. This resolve was carried out in 1783. The correspondence in which Lord Sheffield was made acquainted that he would be separated from his friend, is amongst the most interesting of the letters.

EDWARD GIBBON, ESQ., TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
LORD SHEFFIELD.

“*July 10th, 1783.*”

“At the end of the Parliament, or rather long before that time (for their lives are not worth a year's purchase), our ministers are kicked down stairs, and I am left, their disinterested friend, to fight through another opposition, and to expect the fruits of another revolution. But I will take a more favourable supposition, and conceive myself in six months firmly seated at the Board of Customs; before the end of the next six months I should infallibly hang myself. Instead of regretting my disappointment, I rejoice in my escape; as I am satisfied that no salary could pay me for the irksomeness of attendance, and the drudgery of business so repugnant to my taste (and I will dare to say), so unworthy of my character. Without looking forwards to the possibility, still more remote, of exchanging that laborious office for a smaller annuity, there is surely another plan, more reasonable, more simple, and more

pleasant,—a temporary retreat to a quiet and less expensive scene. In a four years' residence at Lausanne, I should live within my income—save, and even accumulate, my ready money—finish my History, an object of profit as well as fame—expect the contingencies of elderly lives—and return to England at the age of fifty, to form a lasting independent establishment, without courting the smiles of a minister, or apprehending the downfall of a party.”

At Lausanne, during the four years of his residence there—partly with his friend M. Deyverdun, and after the death of that friend, at his own house—the historian led a life eminently favourable to the completion of his great undertaking. The following letter to Mrs. Porten is the picture of what a studious life ought to be, in which the mind is not overburdened with too intense a pursuit of one object of study, and the most exalted intellect does not despise the innocent amusements of common minds.

EDWARD GIBBON, ESQ., TO MRS. PORTEN.

“LAUSANNE, *Dec. 27th*, 1783.

“In speaking of the happiness which I enjoy, you will agree with me in giving the preference to a sincere and sensible friend; and though you cannot discern the full extent of his merit, you will easily believe that Deyverdun is the man. Perhaps two persons so perfectly fitted to live together were never formed by nature and education. We have both read and seen a great variety of objects; the lights and shades of our different characters are happily blended; and a friendship of thirty years has taught us to enjoy our mutual advantages, and to support our unavoidable imperfections. In love and marriage some harsh sounds will sometimes interrupt the harmony, and in the course of time, like our neighbours, we must expect some disagreeable moments; but confidence and freedom are the two pillars of our union, and I am much mistaken if the

building be not solid and comfortable. In this season I rise (not at four in the morning) but a little before eight ; at nine I am called from my study to breakfast, which I always perform alone in the English style ; and, with the aid of Caplin, I perceive no difference between Lausanne and Bentinck Street. Our mornings are usually passed in separate studies ; we never approach each other's door without a previous message, or thrice knocking ; and my apartment is already sacred and formidable to strangers. I dress at half-past one, and at two (an early hour, to which I am not perfectly reconciled) we sit down to dinner. After dinner and the departure of our company,—one, two, or three friends,—we read together some amusing book, or play at chess, or retire to our rooms, or make visits, or go to the coffee-house. Between six and seven the assemblies begin, and I am oppressed only with their number and variety. Whist, at shillings or half-crowns, is the game I generally play, and I play three rubbers with pleasure. Between nine and ten we withdraw to our bread and cheese, and friendly converse, which sends us to bed at eleven ; but these sober hours are too often interrupted by private or numerous suppers, which I have not the courage to resist, though I practise a laudable abstinence at the best furnished tables. Such is the skeleton of my life."

MR. GIBBON TO LORD SHEFFIELD, on the conclusion
of his History.

" June 2nd, 1787.

" My great building is, as it were, completed, and some slight ornaments, painting and glazing of the last finished rooms, may be dispatched without inconvenience in the autumnal residence of Sheffield Place."

I give the well-known passage from Gibbon's 'Memoirs,' in which he describes the completion of his History.

“ It was on the day, or rather night, of the 27th of June, 1787, between the hours of eleven and twelve, that I wrote the last lines of the last page, in a summer-house in my garden. After laying down my pen, I took several turns in a *berceau*, or covered walk of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country, the lake, and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters, and all nature was silent. I will not dissemble the first emotions of joy on recovery of my freedom, and perhaps the establishment of my fame. But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over my mind, by the idea that I had taken an everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion, and that whatsoever might be the future date of my History, the life of the historian must be short and precarious. I will add two facts which have seldom occurred in the composition of six, or at least of five, quartos. 1. My first rough manuscript, without any intermediate copy, has been sent to the press. 2. Not a sheet has been seen by any human eyes excepting those of the author and the printer: the faults and the merits are exclusively my own.

“ After a quiet residence of four years, during which I had never moved ten miles from Lausanne, it was not without some reluctance and terror that I undertook, in a journey of two hundred leagues, to cross the mountains and the sea. Yet this formidable adventure was achieved without danger or fatigue; and at the end of a fortnight I found myself in Lord Sheffield’s house and library, safe, happy, and at home.”

The special object of Gibbon’s visit to England was to superintend the publication of his History, which appeared in 1788. He then returned to Lausanne. His correspondence with Lord Sheffield in 1790 and 1791 has a natural and unavoidable reference to the great crisis of the French Revolution. Although we should be unwilling to introduce

political passages of temporary interest in a collection of familiar correspondence, the two following letters addressed to Lord Sheffield are so interesting and characteristic, that we cannot better conclude our series than by thus exhibiting the great historian of the Past surveying with some emotion the memorable events of the Present.

“ 1790.

“Your indignation will melt into pity, when you hear that for several weeks past I have been again confined to my chamber and my chair. Yet I must hasten, generously hasten, to exculpate the gout, my old enemy, from the curses which you already pour on his head. He is not the cause of this disorder, although the consequences have been somewhat similar. I am satisfied that this effort of nature has saved me from a very dangerous, perhaps a fatal, crisis ; and I listen to the flattering hope that it may tend to keep the gout at a more respectful distance, &c. &c. &c.

“The whole sheet has been filled with dry selfish business ; but I must and will reserve some lines of the cover for a little friendly conversation. I passed four days at the castle of Copet with Necker ; and could have wished to have shewn him, as a warning to any aspiring youth possessed with the demon of ambition. With all the means of private happiness in his power, he is the most miserable of human beings : the past, the present, and the future, are equally odious to him. When I suggested some domestic amusements of books, building, &c. he answered, with a deep tone of despair, ‘ Dans l’état où je suis, je ne puis sentir que le coup de vent qui m’a abattu.’ How different from the conscious cheerfulness with which our poor friend lord North supported his fall ! Madame Necker maintains more external composure, *mais le diable n’y perd rien*. It is true that Necker wished to be carried into the closet, like old Pitt, on the shoulders of the people ; and that he has been ruined by the democracy which he had raised. I believe him

to be an able financier, and know him to be an honest man; too honest, perhaps, for a minister. His rival Calonne passed through Lausanne in his way from Turin, and was soon followed by the prince of Condé, with his son and grandson; but I was too much indisposed to see them. They have, or have had, some wild projects of a counter-revolution: horses have been bought, men levied: and the canton of Berne has too much countenanced such foolish attempts, which must end in the ruin of the party. Burke's book is a most admirable medicine against the French disease, which has made too much progress even in this happy country. I admire his eloquence, I approve his politics, I adore his chivalry, and I can forgive even his superstition. The primitive church, which I have treated with some freedom, was itself at that time an innovation, and I was attached to the old Pagan establishment. The French spread so many lies about the sentiments of the English nation, that I wish the most considerable men of all parties and descriptions would join in some public act, declaring themselves satisfied with, and resolved to support, our present constitution. Such a declaration would have a wonderful effect in Europe; and, were I thought worthy, I myself would be proud to subscribe it. I have a great mind to send you something of a sketch, such as all thinking men might adopt.

"I have intelligence of the approach of my Madeira. I accept with equal pleasure the second pipe, now in the torrid zone. Send me some pleasant details of your domestic state, of Maria, &c. If my lady thinks that my silence is a mark of indifference, my lady is a goose. I *must* have you all at Lausanne next summer."

"LAUSANNE, May 31, 1791.

"At length I see a ray of sunshine breaking from a dark cloud. Your epistle of the 13th arrived this morning, the 25th instant, the day after my return from Geneva; it has been com-

municated to Severy. We now believe that you intend a visit to Lausanne this summer, and we hope that you will execute that intention. If you are a man of honour, you shall find me one ; and, on the day of your arrival at Lausanne, I will ratify my engagement of visiting the British isle before the end of the year 1792, excepting only the fair and foul exception of the gout. You rejoice me by proposing the addition of dear Louisa ; it was not without a bitter pang that I threw her overboard, to lighten the vessel and secure the voyage : I was fearful of the governess, a second carriage, and a long train of difficulty and expense, which might have ended in blowing up the whole scheme. But if you can bodkin the sweet creature into the coach, she will find an easy welcome at Lausanne. The first arrangements which I must make before your arrival may be altered by your own taste on a survey of the premises, and you will all be commodiously and pleasantly lodged. You have heard a great deal of the beauty of my house, garden, and situation ; but such are their intrinsic value that, unless I am much deceived, they will bear the test even of exaggerated praise. From my knowledge of your lordship, I have always entertained some doubt how you would get through the society of a Lausanne winter ; but I am satisfied that, exclusive of friendship, your summer visit to the banks of the Leman Lake will long be remembered as one of the most agreeable periods of your life ; and that you will scarcely regret the amusement of a Sussex committee of navigation in the dog days. You ask for details : what details ? A map of France and a post-book are easy and infallible guides. If the ladies are not afraid of the ocean, you are not ignorant of the passage from Brighton to Dieppe : Paris will then be in your direct road ; and even allowing you to look at the Pandæmonium, the ruins of Versailles, &c., a fortnight diligently employed will clear you from Sheffield place to Gibbon castle. What can I say more ?

“As little have I to say on the subject of my worldly matters, which seem now, Jupiter be praised, to be drawing towards a final conclusion ; since when people part with their money, they are indeed serious. I do not perfectly understand the ratio of the precise sum which you have poured into Gosling’s reservoir, but suppose it will be explained in a general account.

“You have been very dutiful in sending me what I have always desired, a cut Woodfall on a remarkable debate ; a debate indeed most remarkable ! Poor Burke is the most eloquent and rational madman that I ever knew. I love Fox’s feelings, but I detest the political principles of the man, and of the party. Formerly you detested them more strongly during the American war than myself. I am half afraid that you are corrupted by your unfortunate connections. Should you admire the National Assembly, we shall have many an altercation ; for I am as high an aristocrat as Burke himself, and he has truly observed, that it is impossible to debate with temper on the subject of that cursed revolution. In my last excursion to Geneva I frequently saw the Neckers, who by this time are returned to their summer residence at Copet. He is much restored in health and spirits, especially since the publication of his last book, which has probably reached England. Both parties, who agree in abusing him, agree likewise that he is a man of virtue and genius ; but I much fear that the purest intentions have been productive of the most baneful consequences. Our military men, I mean the French, are leaving us every day for the camp of the Princes at Worms, and support what is called* representation. Their hopes are sanguine ; I will not answer for their being well grounded : it is *certain* however that the emperor had an interview the 19th inst. with the count of Artois at Mantua ; and the aristocrats talk in mysterious language of

* The words in the original letter are torn off by the seal.

Spain, Sardinia, the empire, four or five armies, &c. They will doubtless strike a blow this summer : may it not recoil on their own heads ! Adieu. Embrace our female travellers. A short delay !”

Gibbon had the happiness of receiving his old friend at his charming residence, so happily removed from the political strifes of England. Lord Sheffield has given an interesting account of this visit, which may be received as his parting memorial to his illustrious friend :—

“ It has appeared from the foregoing letters, that a visit from myself and my family to Mr. Gibbon at Lausanne, had been for some time in agitation. This long-promised excursion took place in the month of June, 1791, and occasioned a considerable cessation of our correspondence. I landed at Dieppe immediately after the unfortunate Louis XVI. was brought captive to Paris. During my stay in that capital, I had an opportunity of seeing the extraordinary ferment of men’s minds both in the National Assembly and in private societies, and also in my passage through France to Lausanne, where I recalled to my memory the interesting scenes I had witnessed, by frequent conversations with my deceased friend. I might have wished to record his opinions on the subject of the French revolution, if he had not expressed them so well in his own letters. He seemed to suppose, as some of his letters hint, that I had a tendency to the new French opinions. Never was suspicion more unfounded ; nor could it have been admitted into Mr. Gibbon’s mind, but that his extreme friendship for me, and his utter abhorrence of these notions, made him anxious and jealous, even to an excess, that I should not entertain them. He was however soon undeceived : he found that I was fully as averse to them as himself. I had from the first expressed an opinion, that such a change as was aimed at in France would derange all the regular governments in Europe, hazard the internal

quiet and dearest interests of this country, and probably end in bringing on mankind a much greater portion of misery than the most sanguine reformer had ever promised to himself or others to produce of benefit by the visionary schemes of liberty and equality with which the ignorant and vulgar were misled and abused.

“Mr. Gibbon at first, like many others, seemed pleased with the prospect of the reform of inveterate abuses ; but he very soon discovered the mischief which was intended, the imbecility with which concessions were made, and the ruin which must arise from the want of resolution or conduct in the administration of France. He lived to reprobate, in the strongest terms possible, the folly of the first reformers, and the something worse than extravagance and ferocity of their successors. He saw the wild and mischievous tendency of those pretended reforms which, while they professed nothing but amendment, really meant destruction to all social order ; and so strongly was his opinion fixed as to the danger of hasty innovation, that he became a warm and zealous advocate for every sort of old establishment, which he marked in various ways, sometimes rather ludicrously ; and I recollect, in a circle where French affairs were the topic, and some Portuguese present, he seemingly with seriousness, argued in favour of the inquisition at Lisbon, and said he would not, at the present moment, give up that old establishment.

“ It may not be quite uninteresting to the readers of these Memoirs, to know that I found Mr. Gibbon at Lausanne in possession of an excellent house ; the view from which, and from the terrace, was so uncommonly beautiful, that even his own pen would with difficulty describe the scene which it commanded. This prospect comprehended everything vast and magnificent which could be furnished by the finest mountains among the Alps, the most extensive view of the lake of Geneva, with a beautiful varied and cultivated country, adorned by

numerous villas and picturesque buildings, intermixed with beautiful masses of stately trees. Here my friend received us with an hospitality and kindness which I can never forget. The best apartments of the house were appropriated to our use ; the choicest society of the place was sought for to enliven our visit, and render every day of it cheerful and agreeable. It was impossible for any man to be more esteemed and admired than Mr. Gibbon was at Lausanne. The preference he had given to that place, in adopting it for a residence rather than his own country, was felt and acknowledged by all the inhabitants ; and he may have been said almost to have given the law to a set of as willing subjects as any man ever presided over. In return for the deference shewn to him, he mixed without affectation in all the society, I mean all the best society, that Lausanne afforded ; he could indeed command it, and was perhaps for that reason the more partial to it ; for he often declared that he liked society more as a relaxation from study than as expecting to derive from it amusement or instruction ; that to books he looked for improvement, not to living persons. But this I considered partly as an answer to my expressions of wonder that a man who might choose the most various and most generally improved society in the world, namely, in England, should prefer the very limited circle of Lausanne, which he never deserted but for an occasional visit to M. and Madame Necker. It must not however be understood, that in choosing Lausanne for his home, he was insensible to the value of a residence in England : he was not in possession of an income which corresponded with his notions of ease and comfort in his own country. In Switzerland his fortune was ample. To this consideration of fortune may be added another which also had its weight ; from early youth Mr. Gibbon had contracted a partiality for foreign taste, habits of life which made him less a stranger abroad than he was, in some respects, in his native

country. This arose perhaps from having been out of England from his sixteenth to his twenty-first year ; yet, when I came to Lausanne, I found him apparently without relish for French society. During the stay I made with him he renewed his intercourse with the principal French who were at Lausanne, of whom there happened to be a considerable number distinguished for rank or talents ; many indeed respectable for both. I was not absent from my friend's house, except during a short excursion that we made together to M. Necker's at Copet, and a tour to Geneva, Chamouny, over the Col de Balme, to Martigny, St. Maurice, and round the lake by Vevay to Lausanne. In the social and singularly pleasant months that I passed with Mr. Gibbon, he enjoyed his usual cheerfulness, with good health. After he left England in 1788, he had had a severe attack, mentioned in one of the foregoing letters, of an erysipelas, which at last settled in one of his legs, and left something of a dropsical tendency ; for at this time I first perceived a considerable degree of swelling about the ankle.

“In the beginning of October I quitted this delightful residence ; and some time after my return to England our correspondence recommenced.”

Edward Gibbon died in London, on the 16th of January, 1794.

CHAPTER VIII.
AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF
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TO merit a place amongst the best Autobiographers requires a very different quality of mind from that which entitles its possessor to rank amongst the best Historians or the best Biographers. A so-called autobiographer may be in reality merely an historian of his own time, and of events of public interest which have passed under his own observation. Or he may indeed be the biographer of his own life, but merely of facts in his life which might quite as well be related by another man. Autobiography proper belongs more to the province of ethics than to that of history. Strictly speaking, the best autobiographer is he who has the most carefully studied, and who the most faithfully describes the workings of his own mind. Few writers have fulfilled these requirements more thoroughly than Thomas de Quincy. His various personal reminiscences furnish us with trustworthy data—so far as any self-revelation can be trustworthy—by means of which we are enabled to trace every step of his moral and mental history from infancy to mature age.

In selecting from De Quincy's 'Autobiographical Sketches,' and from his 'Confessions of an Opium-Eater,' we shall confine ourselves exclusively to his personal experiences, and avoid touching on that large admixture of gossip about his contemporaries, which, whilst it may have added to the interest of these reminiscences, justly entailed upon their author the charge of having violated the sanctity of private intercourse. The reader who attentively studies De Quincy's character, as sketched by himself, will readily perceive how it arose that, gentleman as he was—not merely by birth and education, but by tone of mind—he could yet lay himself open to a charge of ungentlemanlike conduct. In our extracts from his earliest memories of his own life we shall see the germ of that intense self-consciousness which, in its full development, must lead to a selfish disregard of others. We shall see, also, indications of that love of subtleties and refinements, which is so apt

to confuse the sense of positive right and wrong; and of that morbid fear of consequences which is fatal to the growth of a truly noble character. But when we have pitied the little child, pining in secret for his lost playfellow,—when we have felt for the timid boy, crushed under the tyranny of his big brother—when we have wondered at the foolish lad casting off the restraints of youth before he was fit for the responsibilities of manhood;—when we have thus followed our author through the early stages in his career, we shall have learnt some indulgence for the errors of his mature age.

I.—EARLY INFLUENCES.

Of the external circumstances of his childhood De Quincy thus writes:—

“My father was a merchant; not in the sense of Scotland, where it means a retail dealer, one, for instance, who sells groceries in a cellar, but in the English sense, a sense rigorously exclusive; that is, he was a man engaged in *foreign* commerce, and no other; therefore, in *wholesale* commerce, and no other:—which last limitation of the idea is important, because it brings him within the benefit of Cicero’s condescending distinction—as one who ought to be despised certainly, but not too intensely to be despised even by a Roman senator. . .

“We, the children of the house, stood, in fact, upon the very happiest tier in the social scaffolding for all good influences. The prayer of Agur, ‘Give me neither poverty nor riches,’ was realised for us. That blessing we had, being neither too high nor too low. High enough we were to see models of good manners, of self-respect, and of simple dignity; obscure enough to be left in the sweetest of solitudes. Amply furnished with all the nobler benefits of wealth, with *extra* means of health, of intellectual culture, and of elegant enjoyment, on the other hand, we knew nothing of its social distinctions. Not depressed by the consciousness of privations too sordid, not tempted into restlessness by the consciousness of privileges too aspiring, we

had no motives for shame, we had none for pride. Grateful, also, to this hour I am that, amidst luxuries in all things else, we were trained to a Spartan simplicity of diet—that we fared, in fact, very much less sumptuously than the servants. And if (after the model of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius) I should return thanks to Providence for all the separate blessings of my early situation, these four I would single out as worthy of special commemoration—that I lived in a rustic solitude; that this solitude was in England; that my infant feelings were moulded by the gentlest of sisters, and not by horrid, pugilistic brothers; finally, that I and they were dutiful and loving members of a pure, holy, and magnificent Church.”

It was, perhaps, due to the first and third of these enumerated blessings, that the feelings thus moulded proved so unfit for contact with the outer world. But the influences surrounding De Quincy's childhood were not all soft. Something of a Spartan rule prevailed over more than the diet of the household. The father of the family died when Thomas was in his seventh year, leaving six children to the care of four guardians and of their mother, “who was invested with the legal authority of a guardian.” Mrs. De Quincy appears to have discharged her duties as guardian with strict fidelity. In reviewing his own short-comings as an eldest son—a position to which he succeeded when about ten years of age—De Quincy writes:—

“Any mother, who is a widow, has especial claims on the co-operation of her eldest son in all means of giving a beneficial bias to the thoughts and purposes of the younger children; and if *any* mother, then by a title how special could my own mother invoke such co-operation, who had on *her* part satisfied all the claims made upon her maternal character, by self sacrifices as varied as privately I knew them to be exemplary. Whilst yet comparatively young, not more than thirty-six, she had sternly refused all countenance, on at least two separate occasions, to distinguished proposals of marriage, out of pure

regard to the memory of my father, and to the interests of his children. Could I fail to read, in such unostentatious exemplifications of maternal goodness, a summons to a corresponding earnestness on my part in lightening, as much as possible, the burden of her responsibilities?"

A son's disregard of such a summons becomes less inexcusable when we consider that it is *maternal love*, not "*maternal goodness*," which alone can satisfy all the claims made on the maternal character. In such pictures as the following we miss something more needful to the fatherless children than the rejection of "*distinguished proposals of marriage*." Thomas, a little fellow of seven, is about to start on a visit to some friends living at a distance of about a hundred miles. The child, on this first journey from home, is to share a post-chaise with a stranger—a school-boy going home for his holidays.

"At six o'clock I descended, and not, as usual, to the children's room, but, on this special morning of my life, to a room called the breakfast-room, where I found a blazing fire, candles lighted, and the whole breakfast equipage, as if for my mother, set out, to my astonishment, for no greater person than myself. The scene being in England, and on a December morning, I need scarcely say that it rained; the rain beat violently against the windows, the wind raved, and an aged servant who did the honours of the breakfast-table, pressed me urgently to eat. I need not say that I had no appetite: the fulness of my heart, both from busy anticipation, and from the parting which was at hand, had made me incapable of any other thought or attention but such as pointed to the coming journey. . . . Years that seem innumerable have passed since that December morning in my own life to which I am now recurring; and yet, even to this moment, I recollect the audible throbbing of heart, the leap and rushing of blood, which suddenly surprised me during a deep lull of the wind, when the aged attendant said, without hurry or agitation, but with something of a solemn tone, 'That

is the sound of wheels. I hear the chaise. Mr. H—— will be here directly.’”

Mr. H—— was the travelling companion,—

“If such a word can at all express the relation between the arrogant young blood, just fresh from assuming the *toga virilis*, and a modest child of profound sensibilities, but shy and reserved beyond even English reserve.”

The “child of profound sensibilities” has now to take leave of his mother:—

“What counsels and directions I might happen to receive at the maternal toilet, naturally I have forgotten. The most memorable circumstance to me was, that I, who had never till that time possessed the least or most contemptible coin, received, in a network purse, six glittering guineas, with instructions to put three immediately into Mr. H——’s hands, and the others when he should call for them. The rest of my mother’s counsels, if deep, were not long; she, who had always something of a Roman firmness, shed more milk of roses, I believe, upon my cheeks than tears; and why not? What should there be to *her* corresponding to an ignorant child’s sense of pathos, in a little journey of about a hundred miles? Outside her door, however, there awaited me some silly creatures, women, of course, old and young, from the nursery and the kitchen, who gave, and who received, those fervent kisses which wait only upon love without awe and without disguise.”

Eight years later we are again reminded of the mother who left it to her servants to start her little boy on his dreary journey. The lad of fifteen has been struck with admiration of a young Irish lady whom he has casually met. He exclaims,—

“Never, until this hour, had I thought of women as objects of a possible interest, or of a reverential love. I had known

them either in their infirmities and their unamiable aspects, or else in those sterner relations which made them objects of ungenial and uncompanionable feelings. Now first it struck me that life might owe half its attractions and all its graces to female companionship."

One more extract will suffice to prove that we are not wrong in thinking that one "influence for good" was absent in De Quincy's home—the influence of maternal love. Of his doubts as to whether or no he should communicate to his mother his intention of taking a step which would naturally cause her great alarm, he writes:—

"If I had hesitated (and hesitate I did very sincerely) about such a mode of expressing the consideration due to my mother, it was not from any want of decision in my feeling, but really because I feared to be taunted with this act of tenderness, as arguing an exaggerated estimate of my own importance in my mother's eyes. To be capable of causing any alarming shock, must I not suppose myself an object of special interest?"

Though his mother had nothing better than guineas and milk of roses to bestow upon the shrinking child at his first parting from home, that home had not always had so little love to offer him. A year before this first journey he had lost a companion, of whom he writes:—

"Had'st thou been an idiot, my sister, not the less I must have loved thee, having that capacious heart—overflowing, even as mine overflowed, with tenderness, stung, even as mine was stung, by the necessity of loving and being loved."

Of the death of this sister De Quincy says:—

"The night which for me gathered upon that event ran after my steps far into life; and perhaps at this day I resemble little for good or for ill that which else I should have been."

This affliction of his childhood forms the inaugural chapter of De

Quincy's 'Autobiography,' and the shadow of it is thrown dimly here and there throughout his whole life. He thus solemnly introduces the sad story :—

• "About the close of my sixth year, suddenly the first chapter of my life came to a violent termination ; that chapter which, even within the gates of recovered Paradise, might merit a remembrance. '*Life is finished !*' was the secret misgiving of my heart ; for the heart of infancy is as apprehensive as that of matured wisdom in relation to any capital wound inflicted on the happiness. '*Life is finished ! Finished it is !*' was the hidden meaning that, half unconsciously to myself, lurked within my sighs ; and, as bells heard from a distance on a summer evening seem charged at times with an articulate form of words, some monitory message, that rolls round unceasingly, even so for me some noiseless subterraneous voice seemed to chant continually a secret word, made audible only to my own heart—that 'now is the blossoming of life withered for ever.' Not that such words formed themselves vocally within my ear, or issued audibly from my lips : but such a whisper stole silently to my heart. Yet in what sense could *that* be true ? For an infant not more than six years old, was it possible that the promises of life had been really blighted ? or its golden pleasures exhausted ? Had I seen Rome ? Had I read Milton ? Had I heard Mozart ? No. . St. Peter's, the 'Paradise Lost,' the divine melodies of 'Don Giovanni,' all alike were as yet unrevealed to me, and not more through the accidents of my position than through the necessity of my yet imperfect sensibilities. Raptures there might be in arrear ; but raptures are modes of *troubled* pleasure. The peace, the rest, the central security which belong to love that is past all understanding—these could return no more. Such a love, so unfathomable—such a peace, so unvexed by storms, or the fear of storms—had brooded over those four latter years of my infancy,

which brought me into special relations to my eldest sister ; she being at this period three years older than myself."

When his little playfellow was first attacked by that scourge of childhood, hydrocephalus, the boy had, naturally, no fear of the result :—

"In such circumstances a child, young as myself, feels no anxieties. Looking upon medical men as people privileged, and naturally commissioned, to make war upon pain and sickness, I never had a misgiving about the result. I grieved, indeed, that my sister should lie in bed ; I grieved still more to hear her moan. But all this appeared to me no more than as a night of trouble, on which the dawn would soon arise. Oh ! moment of darkness and delirium, when the elder nurse awakened me from that delusion, and launched God's thunder-bolt at my heart in the assurance that my sister *MUST* die. Rightly it is said of utter, utter misery that it 'cannot be *remembered*.' Itself, as a rememberable thing, is swallowed up in its own chaos. Blank anarchy and confusion of mind fell upon me. Deaf and blind I was, as I reeled under the revelation. I wish not to recall the circumstances of that time, when *my* agony was at its height, and hers, in another sense, was approaching. Enough it is to say that all was soon over ; and the morning of that day had at last arrived which looked down upon her innocent face, sleeping the sleep from which there is no awaking, and upon me sorrowing the sorrow for which there is no consolation."

Some consolations, however, the mourning child found ; and not the least of these—though he does not allude to it in that light—must have been the ennobling power of his grief.

"Grief ! Thou art classed amongst the depressing passions. And true it is that thou humblest to the dust, but also thou exaltest to the clouds. Thou shakest as with ague, but also

thou steadiest like frost. Thou sickenest the heart, but also thou healest its infirmities. Among the very foremost of mine was morbid sensibility to shame. . . . Now, however, all was changed; and for anything which regarded my sister's memory, in one hour I received a new heart. . . . Fifty thousand sneering faces would not have troubled me *now* in any office of tenderness to my sister's memory. Ten legions would not have repelled me from seeking her, if there had been a chance that she could be found. Mockery! it was lost upon me. Laughter! I valued it not. And when I was taunted insultingly with my 'girlish tears,' that word '*girlish*' had no sting for me, except as a verbal echo to the one eternal thought of my heart—that a girl was the sweetest thing which I, in my short life, had known;—that a girl it was who had crowned the earth with beauty, and had opened to my thirst fountains of pure celestial love, from which, in this world, I was to drink no more.

"Now began to unfold themselves the consolations of solitude, those consolations which only I was destined to taste; now, therefore, began to open upon me those fascinations of solitude which, when acting as a co-agency with unresisted grief, end in the paradoxical result of making out of grief itself a luxury; such a luxury as finally becomes a snare, overhanging life itself, and the energies of life, with growing menaces. All deep feelings of a *chronic* class agree in this that they seek for solitude, and are fed by solitude. Deep grief, deep love, how naturally do these ally themselves with religious feeling, and all three—love, grief, religion—are haunters of solitary places. Love, grief, and the mystery of devotion—what were these without solitude? All day long, when it was not impossible for me to do so, I sought the most silent and sequestered nooks in the grounds about the house, or in the neighbouring fields. The awful stillness oftentimes of summer

noons, when no winds were abroad, the appealing silence of grey or misty afternoons—these were fascinations as of witchcraft. Into the woods, into the desert air I gazed, as if some comfort lay hid in *them*. I wearied the heavens with my inquest of beseeching looks. Obstinate, I tormented the blue depths with my scrutiny, sweeping them for ever with my eyes, and searching them for one angelic face that might, perhaps, have permission to reveal itself for a moment.”

The precocious child's solitary pining did not, fortunately, continue long uninterrupted:—

“Well it was for me at this period, if well it were for me to live at all, that from any continued contemplation of my misery I was forced to wean myself, and suddenly to assume the harness of life. Else, under the morbid languishing of grief, and of what the Romans call *desiderium* (the yearning too obstinate after one irrecoverable face), too probably I should have pined away into an early grave. Harsh was my awaking; but the rough febrifuge which this awaking administered, broke the strength of my sickly reveries through a period of more than two years; by which time, under the natural expansion of my bodily strength, the danger had passed over.”

This awaking was brought about by the return from a public school of De Quincy's eldest brother, five years his senior. By this brother—who was “as full of quarrel as it is possible to imagine,” and whose “genius for mischief amounted to inspiration”—he was soon introduced into the world of strife. The two boys were sent daily, for classical instruction, to one of their guardians, a clergyman living at Salford, two miles from their home. A factory lay on their road.

“It was on an early day of our new *tyrocinium*, or perhaps on the very first, that as we passed the bridge a boy happening to issue from the factory sang out to us derisively, ‘Holloa, Bucks!’”

The boy "consummated his crime" by the cry of "Boots! boots!" in allusion to the aristocratic dress of the young De Quincys, the elder of whom resented the affront by a shower of stones. After this commencement of hostilities,—

"We fought every day, and, generally speaking, *twice* every day, and the result was pretty uniform, viz., that my brother and I terminated the battle by insisting upon our undoubted right to run away. *Magna Charta*, I should fancy, secures that great right to every man; else, surely, it is sadly defective. But out of this catastrophe to most of our skirmishes, and to all our pitched battles except one, grew a standing schism between my brother and myself. My unlimited obedience had respect to action, but not to opinion. Loyalty to my brother did not rest upon hypocrisy; because I was faithful, it did not follow that I must be false in relation to his capricious opinions. And these opinions sometimes took the shape of acts. Twice, at the least, in every week, but sometimes every night, my brother insisted on singing 'Te Deum' for supposed victories which he had won; and he insisted also on my bearing a part in these 'Te Deums.' Now, as I knew of no such victories, but resolutely asserted the truth—viz., that we ran away—a slight jar was thus given to the else triumphal effect of these musical ovations."

Thomas de Quincy's "unlimited obedience in action" was founded on his brother's claims by right of primogeniture:—

"First, it seems that I owed military allegiance to *him*, as my commander-in-chief, whenever we 'took the field;' secondly, by the law of nations, I, being a cadet of my house, owed suit and service to him who was its head; and he assured me that twice in the year, on *my* birthday and on *his*, he had a right, strictly speaking, to make me lie down, and to set his foot upon my neck; lastly, by a law not so rigorous, but valid

amongst gentlemen—viz., ‘by the *comity* of nations,’—it seems I owed eternal deference to one so much older than myself, so much wiser, stronger, braver, more beautiful, and more swift of foot. Something like all this in tendency I had already believed, though I had not so minutely investigated the modes and grounds of my duty. By temperament, and through natural dedication to despondency, I felt resting upon me always too deep and gloomy a sense of obscure duties attached to life that I never *should* be able to fulfil; a burden which I could not carry, and which yet I did not know how to throw off. Glad, therefore, I was to find the whole tremendous weight of obligations—the law and the prophets—all crowded into this one pocket command, ‘Thou shalt obey thy brother as God’s vicar upon earth.’”

The liege lord’s bellicose tendencies brought sore distress upon his obedient vassal :—

“Once having begun, it followed naturally that the war should deepen in bitterness. Wounds that wrote memorials in the flesh, insults that rankled in the heart—these were not features of the case likely to be forgotten by our enemies, and far less by my fiery brother. I, for my part, entered not into any of the passions that war may be supposed to kindle, except only the chronic passion of anxiety. *Fear* it was not; for experience had taught me that, under the random firing of our undisciplined enemies, the chances were not many of being wounded. But the uncertainties of the war; the doubts in every separate action whether I could keep up the requisite connection with my brother; and, in case I could not, the utter darkness that surrounded my fate; whether, as a trophy won from Israel, I should be dedicated to the service of some Manchester Dagon, or pass through fire to Moloch; all these contingencies, for me that had no friend to consult, ran too

violently into the master-current of my constitutional despondency, ever to give way under any casual elation of success."

This war with the factory-boys was not the only war into which the unfortunate child, not yet seven years of age, was forced by the restless energy and pugnacity of his elder brother:—

"Both my brother and myself, for the sake of varying our intellectual amusements, occupied ourselves at times in governing imaginary kingdoms. . . . Here, at least, there seemed to be no reason why I should come into collision with my brother. At any rate, I took pains not to do so. But all was in vain. My destiny was to live in one eternal element of feud.

"My own kingdom was an island called Gombroon. But in what parallel of north or south latitude it lay, I concealed for a time as rigorously as ancient Rome through every century concealed her real name. The object in this provisional concealment was to regulate the position of my own territory by that of my brother's; for I was determined to place a monstrous world of waters between us, as the only chance (and a very poor one it proved) for compelling my brother to keep the peace."

A distance of 75 degrees of latitude, however, did not avail Gombroon against the infinite resources of her enemy.

"My brother stunned me by explaining that, although his capital lay in lat. 65 deg. N., not the less his dominions swept southwards through a matter of 80 or 90 deg.; and, as to the Tropic of Capricorn, much of it was his own private property. I was aghast at hearing *that*. It seemed that vast horns and promontories ran down from all parts of his dominions towards any country whatsoever, in either hemisphere—empire, or republic; monarchy, polyarchy, or anarchy—that he might have reasons for assaulting."

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But a more terrible affliction than threats of invasion was about to fall upon the unhappy monarch of Gombroon. Lord Monboddo's hypothesis, that originally the human race had been a variety of the ape, happened to attract the notice of the elder De Quincy.

"My brother mused upon this reverie, and, in a few days, published an extract from some scoundrel's travels in Gombroon, according to which the Gombroonians had not yet emerged from this early condition of apedom. They, it seems, were still *homines caudati*. Overwhelming to me and stunning was the ignominy of this horrible discovery. . . .

"Still there was one resource: if I 'didn't like it'—meaning the state of things in Gombroon—I might 'abdicate.' Yes, I knew *that*. I might abdicate; and, once having cut the connection between myself and the poor abject islanders, I might seem to have no further interest in the degradation that affected them. After such a disruption between us, what was it to me if they had even three tails apiece? Ah, *that* was fine talking; but this connection with my poor subjects had grown up so slowly and so genially, in the midst of struggles so constant against the encroachments of my brother and his rascally people; we had suffered so much together; and the filaments connecting them with my heart were so aërially fine and fantastic, but for that reason so unseverable, that I abated nothing of my anxiety on their account; making this difference only in my legislation and administrative cares, that I pursued them more in a spirit of despondency, and retreated more shyly from communicating them. It was in vain that my brother counselled me to dress my people in the Roman toga, as the best means of concealing their ignominious appendages: if he meant this as comfort, it was none to me; the disgrace lay in the fact, not in its publication; and, in my heart, though I continued to honour Lord Monboddo (whom I heard my guardian also daily delighting to honour) as a good Grecian, yet secretly I

curled the *Aoristus Primus*, as the indirect occasion of a misery which was not and could not be comprehended."

These sufferings, actual and imaginary, were brought to a close by the author of them being sent to London to learn drawing. There the clever, overbearing boy died of typhus fever. This final separation from his eldest brother is recorded by De Quincy with something of exultation.

"This separation, which proved an eternal one, and contributed to deepen my constitutional propensity to gloomy meditation, had for me (partly on that account, but much more through the sudden birth of perfect independence which so unexpectedly it opened) the value of a revolutionary experience. A new date, a new starting point, a redemption (as it might be called) into the golden sleep of halcyon quiet, after everlasting storms, suddenly dawned upon me; and, not as any casual intercalation of holidays that would come to an end—but, for anything that appeared to the contrary, as the perpetual tenor of my future career. No longer was the factory a Carthage for me: if any obdurate old Cato there were who found his amusement in denouncing it with a daily '*Delenda est*,' take notice (I said silently to myself) that I acknowledge no such tiger for a friend of mine. Never more was the bridge across the Irwell a bridge of sighs for me. And the meanest of the factory population—thanks be to their discrimination—despised my pretensions too entirely to waste a thought or a menace upon a cipher so abject."

These expectations of perpetual peace were not, however, fully realised. Five years later the demon of discord, which seems to have always hovered over De Quincy's boyhood, forced him into a war with the head class of the Bath Grammar School, who took umbrage at the lower boy's proficiency in Latin verse. Of this contest, which lasted more than a year, he bitterly complains.

"I detested distinctions that were connected with mortification to others; and, even if I could have got over *that*, the

eternal feud fretted and tormented my nature. Love that once in my childhood had been so mere a necessity to me, *that* had long been a reflected ray from a departed sunset. But peace, and freedom from strife, if love were no longer possible (as so rarely it is in this world), was the clamorous necessity of my nature. To contend with somebody was still my fate; how to escape the contention I could not see; and yet, for itself, and for the deadly passions into which it forced me, I hated and loathed it more than death."

2.—A YOUTHFUL FOLLY, ITS CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES.

At the commencement of his 'Confessions of an Opium-Eater,' De Quincy exclaims,—

"Oh, spirit of merciful interpretation, angel of forgiveness to youth and its aberrations, that hearkenest for ever as if to some sweet choir of far-off female intercessions! will ye, choir that intercede—wilt thou, angel that forgivest—join together, and charm away that mighty phantom, born amidst the gathering mists of remorse, which strides after me in pursuit from forgotten days—towering for ever into proportions more and more colossal, overhanging and overshadowing my head as if close behind, yet dating its nativity from hours that are fled by more than half a century? Oh, heavens! that it should be possible for a child not seventeen years old, by a momentary blindness, by listening to a false, false whisper from his own bewildered heart, by one erring step, by a motion this way or that, to change the currents of his destiny, to poison the fountain of his peace, and in the twinkling of an eye to lay the foundations of a life-long repentance!"

The causes which led to this "erring step" become apparent on De Quincy leaving the private school which had succeeded the Bath Grammar School in his varied educational course, and, as he terms it, entering the world. This entrance into the world was brought about

by a visit to Ireland with his friend Lord Westport. At this period he was in his 15th year, a man in mental acquirements, but an infant in all matters of every-day life. During this visit to Ireland a meeting with a beautiful girl, in a public passage-boat from Tullamore to Dublin, is recorded by De Quincy as having caused a revolution in his life. The shy boy had been placed in a position which was deeply mortifying to his sensitive pride. From this position he had been rescued by the quick wit of the Irish beauty. The boy gazes with admiration at his fair champion. The lady blushes, and the boy is on the spot transformed into a man!

“That blush, evanescent as it was—the mere possibility that I, so very a child, should have called up the most transitory sense of bashfulness or confusion upon any female cheek, first, and suddenly as with a flash of lightning penetrating some utter darkness—illuminated to my own startled consciousness, never again to be obscured, the pure and powerful ideal of womanhood and womanly excellence. This was, in a proper sense, a *revelation*; it fixed a great era of change in my life; and this new-born idea, being agreeable to the uniform tendencies of my own nature—that is, lofty and aspiring—it governed my life with great power, and with most salutary effects. Ever after, throughout the period of youth, I was jealous of my own demeanour, reserved and awestruck in the presence of women; reverencing often, not so much *them*, as my own ideal of woman latent in them. For I carried about with me the idea, to which often I seemed to see an approximation, of

‘A perfect woman, nobly plann’d,
To warn, to comfort, to command.’

And from this day I was an altered creature, never again relapsing into the careless, irreflective mind of childhood.”

This revelation occurred at a most unfortunate moment:—

“For more than a year, everything connected with schools

and the business of schools had been growing more and more hateful to me. At first, however, my disgust had been merely the disgust of weariness and pride. But now, at this crisis (for crisis it was virtually to me), when a premature development of my own mind was rushing in like a cataract, forcing channels for itself, and for the new tastes which it introduced, my disgust was no longer simply intellectual, but had deepened into a *moral* sense as of some inner dignity continually violated. Once the petty round of school tasks had been felt as a molestation; but now, at last, as a degradation. . . . Precisely at this culminating point of my self-conflict, did that scene occur which I have described with Miss Bl—. In that hour another element, which assuredly was not wanted, fell into the seething caldron of new-born impulses that, like the magic caldron of Medea, was now transforming me into a new creature.”

All this, in the language of plain common sense, is nothing more than a precocious boy's vanity and self-will rebelling against all wholesome restraints. Unfortunately, the injudicious friends who are always ready to flatter a too forward youth, were not wanting in this case. Combined with these influences came the external causes—by themselves quite inadequate to such a result—which were to aid in bringing about the catastrophe.

“About two months after leaving Laxton, my fate in the worst shape I had anticipated was solemnly and definitely settled. My guardians agreed that the most prudent course, with a view to my pecuniary interests, was to place me at the Manchester Grammar School; not with a view to further improvement in my classical knowledge, though the head-master was a sound scholar, but simply with a view to one of the school *exhibitions*. . . .

“A three years' residence at this school obtained an annual allowance for seven years of nearly (if not quite) 50% ; which

sum, added to my own patrimonial income of 150*l.*, would have made up the annual 200*l.* ordinarily considered the proper allowance for an Oxford under-graduate."

In spite of his prejudice against the society of school-boys, De Quincy acknowledges that, with regard to their literary attainments,—

"I felt more respectfully towards the majority of my senior schoolfellows than ever I had fancied it possible that I should find occasion to feel towards any boys whatever. My intercourse with those amongst them who had any conversational talents greatly stimulated my intellect.

"This intercourse, however, fell into narrower limits soon after the time of my entrance. I acknowledge, with deep self-reproach, that every possible indulgence was allowed to me which the circumstances of the establishment made possible. I had, for example, a private room allowed, in which I not only studied, but also slept at night. The room being airy and cheerful, I found nothing disagreeable in this double use of it. Naturally, however, this means of retirement tended to sequester me from my companions: for, whilst liking the society of some amongst them, I also had a deadly liking (perhaps a morbid liking) for solitude. To make my present solitude the more fascinating, my mother sent me five guineas *extra*, for the purchase of an admission to the Manchester Library."

After enumerating these indulgences, De Quincy very naturally exclaims,—

"Oh, wherefore, then, was it—through what inexplicable growth of evil in myself or in others—that now in the summer of 1802, when peace was brooding over all the land, peace succeeding to a bloody seven years' war, but peace which already gave signs of breaking into a far bloodier war, some dark sympathising movement within my own heart, as if echoing and

repeating in mimicry the political menaces of the earth, swept with storm clouds across that otherwise serene and radiant dawn which should have heralded my approaching entrance into life. *Inexplicable* I have allowed myself to call this fatal error in my life, because such it *must* appear to others; since, even to myself, so often as I fail to realize the case by reproducing a reflex impression in kind, and in degree, of the suffering before which my better angel gave way—yes, even to myself this collapse of my resisting energies seems inexplicable.”

It is not so inexplicable to those who have seen the “growth of evil” in himself, and it is made still less inexplicable by one of his own confessions—not, however, applied by him to this case:—

“I confess it as a besetting infirmity of mine, that I am too much of an Eudæmonist; I hanker too much after a state of happiness, both for myself and others; I cannot face misery, whether my own or not, with an eye of sufficient firmness; and am little capable of encountering present pain for the sake of any reversionary benefit.”

De Quincy's own explanations of the folly he deplors are based solely upon physical causes. Want of exercise, resulting from a bad arrangement of the school work, had acted injuriously upon his health. This led to another misfortune:—

“Under these circumstances, I threw myself for aid, in a case so simple that any clever boy in a druggist's shop would have known how to treat it, upon the advice of an old, old apothecary, who had full authority from my guardians to run up a most furious account against me for medicine. This being the regular mode of payment, inevitably, and unconsciously, he was biassed to a mode of treatment—viz. by drastic medicines varied without end—which fearfully exasperated the complaint. This complaint, as I now know, was the simplest possible

derangement of the liver, a torpor in its action that might have been set to rights in three days."

After trying, in vain, to obtain an abbreviation of his school residence—of which he had already completed more than half the required term,—

"But now, at last, came over me, from the mere excess of bodily suffering and mental disappointments, a frantic and rapturous re-agency. In the United States the case is well known, and many times has been described by travellers, of that furious instinct which, under a secret call for saline variations of diet, drives all the tribes of buffaloes for thousands of miles to the common centre of the 'Salt-licks.' . . . Such an instinct it was, such a rapturous command—even so potent, and, alas! even so blind—that, under the whirl of tumultuous indignation and of new-born hope, suddenly transfigured my whole being. In the twinkling of an eye, I came to an adamantine resolution—not as if issuing from any act or any choice of my own, but as if passively received from some dark oracular legislation external to myself. That I would elope from Manchester—this was the resolution."

This resolution was not carried out without sundry misgivings:—

"The morning came which was to launch me into the world; that morning from which, and from its consequences, my whole succeeding life has, in many important points, taken its colouring. At half after three I rose, and gazed with deep emotion at the ancient collegiate church, 'dress'd in earliest light,' and beginning to crimson with the deep lustre of a cloudless July morning. I was firm and immovable in my purpose, but yet agitated by anticipation of uncertain danger and troubles. To this agitation the deep peace of the morning presented an affecting contrast, and in some degree a medicine. The silence

was more profound than that of midnight: and to me the silence of a summer morning is more touching than all other silence, because, the light being broad and strong as that of noonday at other seasons of the year, it seems to differ from perfect day chiefly because man is not yet abroad; and thus, the peace of nature, and of the innocent creatures of God, seems to be secure and deep, only so long as the presence of man, and his unquiet spirit, are not there to trouble its sanctity."

When completely prepared for departure,—

"Suddenly a sort of trance, a frost as of some deathlike revelation, wrapped round me: and I found renewed within me a hateful remembrance derived from a moment that I had long left behind."

Two years before, De Quincy, when visiting the Whispering Gallery at St. Paul's,—

"had suddenly been surprised by a dream as profound as at present, in which a thought that often had persecuted me figured triumphantly. This thought turned upon the fatality that must often attend an evil choice. . . . Long before that fifteenth year of mine, I had noticed, as a worm lying at the heart of life and fretting its security, the fact that innumerable acts of choice change countenance and are variously appraised at varying stages of life—shift with the shifting hours. Already, at fifteen, I had become deeply ashamed of judgments which I had once pronounced, of idle hopes that I had once encouraged, false admirations or contempts with which once I had sympathised. And as to acts which I surveyed with any doubts at all, I never felt sure that after some succession of years I might not feel withering doubts about them, both as to principle and as to inevitable results.

“This sentiment of nervous recoil from any word or deed that could not be recalled had been suddenly re-awakened on that London morning, by the impressive experience of the Whispering Gallery. At the earlier end of the gallery had stood my friend, breathing in the softest of whispers a solemn but not acceptable truth. At the further end, after running along the walls of the gallery, that solemn truth reached me as a deafening menace in tempestuous uproars. And now, in these last lingering moments, when I dreamed ominously with open eyes in my Manchester study, once again that London menace broke angrily upon me as out of a thick cloud with redoubled strength; a voice, too late for warning, seemed audibly to say, ‘Once leave this house, and a Rubicon is placed between thee and all possibility of return. Thou wilt not say that what thou doest is altogether approved in thy secret heart. Even now thy conscience speaks against it in sullen whispers; but at the other end of thy long life-gallery that same conscience will speak to thee in volleying thunders.’

“A sudden step upon the stairs broke up my dream, and recalled me to myself. Dangerous hours were now drawing near, and I prepared for a hasty farewell.”

The warning voice comes to De Quincy again a few months later, when he is on the point of carrying out a resolution still more unwise than his flight from school. This flight very naturally aroused the indignation of his guardians, and of his mother. Of the latter he says,—

“At present the whole artillery of her displeasure seemed to be unmasked, and *justly* unmasked, against a moral aberration, that offered for itself no cause that was obvious in one moment, that was legible at one glance, that could utter itself in one word. My mother was predisposed to think ill of all causes that required many words: I, predisposed to subtleties of all

sorts and degrees, had naturally become acquainted with cases that could not unrobe their apparellings down to that degree of simplicity. If in this world there is one misery having no relief, it is the pressure on the heart from the *incommunicable*."

To escape from this pressure the runaway left his home to pursue his original purpose of walking amongst the Welsh mountains. On an allowance of a guinea a-week he entered upon the life of freedom which he had so long coveted. After spending four months in Wales, alternately sailing, as he says, "upon the high-priced and the low-priced tack," another frantic impulse appears to have seized him:—

"About this time—just when it was becoming daily more difficult to eke out the weekly funds for high-priced inns by the bivouacking system—as if some overmastering fiend, some instinct of migration, sorrowful but irresistible, were driving me forth to wander like the unhappy Io of the Grecian mythus, some œstrum of hidden persecution that bade me fly when no man pursued; not in false hope—for my hopes whispered but a doubtful chance; not in reasonable fear—for all was sweet pastoral quiet and autumnal beauty around me, suddenly I took a fierce resolution to sacrifice my weekly allowance, to slip my anchor, and to throw myself in desperation upon London. . . .

"The day on which I left Oswestry was a day of golden sunshine amongst the closing days of November. As truly as Jessica's moonlight ('Merchant of Venice'), this golden sunshine might be said to *sleep* upon the woods and the fields, so awful was the universal silence, so profound the death-like stillness. It was a day belonging to a brief and pathetic season of farewell summer resurrection, which, under one name or other, is known almost everywhere. . . . It is that last brief resurrection of summer in its most brilliant memorials, a resurrection that has no root in the past, nor steady hold upon the future, like the lambent and fitful gleams from an expiring

lamp, mimicking what is called the 'lightning before death,' in sick patients, when close upon their end. There is the feeling of a conflict that has been going on between the lingering powers of summer and the strengthening powers of winter, not unlike that which moves by antagonistic forces in some deadly inflammation hurrying forwards through fierce struggles into the final repose of mortification. For a time the equilibrium has been maintained between the hostile forces; but at last the antagonism is overthrown; the victory is accomplished for the powers that fight on the side of death; simultaneously with the conflict, the pain of conflict has departed, and thenceforward the gentle process of collapsing life, no longer fretted by counter movements, slips away with holy peace into the noiseless deeps of the Infinite. So sweet, so ghostly, in its soft, golden smiles silent as a dream, and quiet as the dying trance of a saint, faded through all its stages this departing day, along the whole length of which I bade farewell for many a year to Wales, and farewell to summer. In the very aspect and the sepulchral stillness of the motionless day, as solemnly it wore away through morning, noontide, afternoon, to meet the darkness that was hurrying to swallow up its beauty, I had a fantastic feeling as though I read the very language of resignation when bending before some irresistible agency. And at intervals I heard—in how different a key!—the raving, the everlasting uproar of that dreadful metropolis, which at every step was coming nearer, and beckoning (as it seemed) to myself for purposes as dim, for issues as incalculable, as the path of cannon-shots fired at random and in darkness."

At Shrewsbury he has to wait, in the ball-room of an hotel, for the London mail, and here his resolution is again assailed by the warning voice from the Whispering Gallery.

"For nearly two hours I had heard fierce winds arising, and

the whole atmosphere had, by this time, become one vast laboratory of hostile movements in all directions. Such a chaos, such a distracting wilderness of dim sights, and of those awful 'sounds that live in darkness' (Wordsworth's 'Excursion'), never had I consciously witnessed. Rightly, and by a true instinct, had I made my farewell adieu to summer. All through the day, Wales and her grand mountain ranges—Penmaenmawr, Snowdon, Cader Idris—had divided my thoughts with London. But now rose London—sole, dark, infinite—brooding over the whole capacities of my heart. Other object, other thought, I could not admit. Long before midnight the whole household (with the exception of a solitary waiter) had retired to rest. Two hours, at least, were left to me, after twelve o'clock had struck, for heart-shaking reflections. More than ever I stood upon the brink of a precipice; and the local circumstances around me deepened and intensified these reflections, impressed upon them solemnity and terror, sometimes even horror. . . .

"The unusual dimensions of the rooms, especially their towering height, brought up continually and obstinately, through natural links of associated feelings or images, the mighty vision of London waiting for me afar off. An altitude of nineteen or twenty feet showed itself unavoidably upon an exaggerated scale in some of the smaller side rooms—meant probably for cards or for refreshments. This single feature of the rooms, their unusual altitude, and the echoing hollowness which had become the exponent of that altitude—this one terrific feature (for terrific it was in the effect), together with crowding and evanescent images of the flying feet that so often had spread gladness through these halls on the wings of youth and hope at seasons when every room rang with music—all this, rising in tumultuous vision, whilst the dead hours of night were stealing along, all around me—household and town—sleeping, and whilst against the windows

more and more the storm was raving, and to all appearance endlessly growing, threw me into the deadliest condition of nervous emotion under contradictory forces, high over which predominated horror recoiling from that unfathomed abyss in London into which I was now so wilfully precipitating myself. Often I looked out and examined the night. Wild it was beyond all description, and dark as 'the inside of a wolf's throat.' But at intervals, when the wind, shifting continually, swept in such a direction as to clear away the vast curtain of vapour, the stars shone out, though with a light unusually dim and distant. Still, as I turned inwards to the echoing chambers, or outwards to the wild, wild night, I saw London expanding her visionary gates to receive me, like some dreadful mouth of Acheron (*Acherontis avari*). Thou also, Whispering Gallery! once again, in those moments of conscious and wilful desolation, didst to my ear utter monitorial sighs. For once again I was preparing to utter an irrevocable word, to enter upon one of those fatally tortuous paths of which the windings can never be unlinked."

Nevertheless he pursued his journey, the object of which was to borrow upon his expectations sufficient to enable him to withdraw from the knowledge of all his connections until he should come of age. Whilst vainly endeavouring to carry out this scheme he had to suffer the most terrible privations.

"Subject to these eternal deceptions, I continued for seven or eight weeks to live most parsimoniously in lodgings. These lodgings, though barely decent in my eyes, ran away with at least two-thirds of my remaining guineas. At length, whilst it was yet possible to reserve a solitary half-guinea towards the more urgent interest of finding daily food, I gave up my rooms, and, stating exactly the circumstances in which I stood, requested permission of Mr. Brunell to make use of his large house as a nightly asylum from the open air. . . .

“Towards nightfall I went down to Greek Street, and found, on taking possession of my new quarters, that the house already contained one single inmate, a poor, friendless child, apparently ten years old, but she seemed hunger-bitten, and sufferings of that sort often make children look older than they are. From this forlorn child I learned that she had slept and lived there alone for some time before I came; and great joy the poor creature expressed when she found that I was in future to be her companion through the hours of darkness. . . . We lay upon the floor, with a bundle of law-papers for a pillow, but with no other covering than a large horseman’s cloak; afterwards, however, we discovered in a garret an old sofa-cover, a small piece of rug, and some fragments of other articles, which added a little to our comfort. The poor child crept close to me for warmth, and for security against her ghostly enemies. When I was not more than usually ill, I took her into my arms, so that, in general, she was tolerably warm, and often slept when I could not; for, during the last two months of my sufferings I slept much in the daytime, and was apt to fall into transient dozings at all hours. But my sleep distressed me more than my watching; for, besides the tumultuousness of my dreams (which were only not so awful as those which I shall have hereafter to describe as produced by opium), my sleep was never more than what is called *dog-sleep*, so that I could hear myself moaning, and very often I was awakened suddenly by my own voice.”

One other friend he had at this time:—

“This person was a young woman, and one of that unhappy class who belong to the outcasts and pariahs of our female population. . . . For many weeks I had walked, at nights, with this poor friendless girl up and down Oxford Street, or had rested with her on steps, or under the shelter of porticoes.

One night, when we were pacing slowly along Oxford Street, and after a day when I had felt unusually ill and faint, I requested her to turn off with me into Soho Square. Thither we went ; and we sat down on the steps of a house, which, to this hour, I never pass without a pang of grief, and an inner act of homage to the spirit of that unhappy girl, in memory of the noble act which she there performed. Suddenly, as we sat, I grew much worse. I had been leaning my head against her bosom, and all at once I sank from her arms, and fell backwards on the steps. . . . Uttering a cry of terror, but without a moment's delay, she ran off into Oxford Street, and in less time than could be imagined, returned to me with a glass of port-wine and spices, that acted upon my empty stomach (which at that time would have rejected all solid food) with an instantaneous power of restoration, and for this glass the generous girl, without a murmur, paid out of her own humble purse, at a time, be it remembered, when she had scarcely wherewithal to purchase the bare necessities of life, and when she could have no reason to expect that I should ever be able to reimburse her."

At last an opening was made for reconciliation with his guardians, and the foolish runaway returned home.

"So then, Oxford Street, stony-hearted step-mother, thou that listenest to the sighs of orphans, and drinkest the tears of children, at length I was dismissed from thee ! The time was come that I no more should pace in anguish thy never-ending terraces : no more should wake and dream in captivity to the pangs of hunger. Successors too many to myself and Ann have doubtless since then trodden in our footsteps, inheritors of our calamities. Other orphans than Ann have sighed ; tears have been shed by other children ; and thou, Oxford Street, hast since those days echoed to the groans of

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innumerable hearts. For myself, however, the storm which I had outlived seemed to have been the pledge of a long fair weather; the premature sufferings which I had paid down, to have been accepted as a ransom for many years to come, as a price of long immunity from sorrow; and if again I walked in London, a solitary and contemplative man (as oftentimes I did), I walked for the most part in serenity and peace of mind. And, although it is true that the calamities of my novitiate in London had struck root so deeply in my bodily constitution, that afterwards they shot up and flourished afresh, and grew into a noxious umbrage that has overshadowed and darkened my latter years, yet these second assaults of suffering were met with a fortitude more confirmed, with the resources of a maturer intellect, and with alleviations, how deep! from sympathising affection."

3.—OPIUM-EATING AND ITS EFFECTS.

Mrs. Gordon, in her memoir of her father, Professor Wilson, says of De Quincy:—"The graces of nature with which De Quincy was endowed fascinated my father, as they did every mind that came within the sphere of his extraordinary power in the days of his mental vigour, ere that sad destiny—for so it may be called—overtook him, which the brightness and strength of his intellect had no power to avert. . . . It may well be cause of regret that, by his own fatal indulgence, he had warped the original beauty of his nature."

Of the first step towards this "fatal indulgence" De Quincy thus writes:—

"It is very long since I first took opium; so long, that if it had been a trifling incident in my life, I might have forgotten its date: but cardinal events are not to be forgotten; and, from circumstances connected with it, I remember that this inauguration into the use of opium must be referred to the spring or to the autumn of 1804; during which seasons I was in London,

having come thither for the first time since my entrance at Oxford."

The occasion of this cardinal event was a rheumatic pain in the head and face, as a cure for which a friend recommended opium.

"Arrived at my lodgings, it may be supposed that I lost not a moment in taking the quantity prescribed. I was necessarily ignorant of the whole art and mystery of opium-taking; and what I took, I took under every disadvantage. But I took it; and in an hour, O heavens! what a revulsion! what a resurrection, from its lowest depths, of the inner spirit! what an apocalypse of the world within me! That my pains had vanished was now a trifle in my eyes; this negative effect was swallowed up in the immensity of those positive effects which had opened before me, in the abyss of divine enjoyment thus suddenly revealed. Here was a panacea, a *φάρμακον νηπενθες* for all human woes; here was the secret of happiness, about which philosophers had disputed for so many ages, at once discovered; happiness might now be bought for a penny, and carried in the waistcoat pocket; portable ecstasies might be had corked up in a pint bottle; and peace of mind could be sent down by the mail."

Having once tasted such delights, the renewal of them soon became an habitual indulgence:—

"The late Duke of Norfolk used to say, 'Next Monday, wind and weather permitting, I purpose to be drunk;' and in like manner I used to fix beforehand how often within a given time, when, and with what accessory circumstances of festal joy, I would commit a debauch of opium. This was seldom more than once in three weeks; for at that time I could not have ventured to call every day (as afterwards I did) for '*a glass of laudanum negus, warm and without sugar.*' No; once in three

weeks sufficed ; and the time selected was either a Tuesday or a Saturday night ; my reason for which was this :—Tuesday and Saturday were for many years the regular nights of performance at the King's Theatre (or Opera House) ; and there it was in those times that Grassini sang ; and her voice (the richest of *contraltos*) was delightful to me beyond all that I had ever heard. . . . Shivering with expectation I sat, when the time drew near for her golden epiphany ; shivering I rose from my seat, incapable of rest, when that heavenly and harp-like voice sang its own victorious welcome in its prelusive *threttánelo—threttánelo* (θρεττάνελω—θρεττάνελω). The choruses were divine to hear ; and when Grassini appeared in some interlude, as she often did, and poured forth her passionate soul as Andromache at the Tomb of Hector, &c., I question whether any Turk, of all that ever entered the paradise of opium-eaters, can have had half the pleasure I had. . . .

“These were my opera pleasures ; but another pleasure I had, which, as it could be had only on a Saturday night, occasionally struggled with my love of the opera. . . . Different men throw their feelings into different channels, and most men are apt to show their interest in the concerns of the poor chiefly by sympathy with their distresses and sorrows : I at that time was disposed to express mine by sympathising with their pleasures. The pains of poverty I had lately seen too much of—more than I wished to remember ; but the pleasures of the poor, their hopes, their consolations of spirit, and their restings from toil, can never become oppressive to contemplate. . . . For the sake, therefore, of witnessing, upon as large a scale as possible, a spectacle with which my sympathy was so entire, I used often, on Saturday nights, after I had taken opium, to wander forth, without much regarding the direction or the distance, to all the markets, and other parts of London, whither the poor resort on a Saturday night for laying out their wages.

Many a family party, consisting of a man, his wife, and sometimes one or two of their children, have I listened to, as they stood consulting on their ways and means, or the strength of their exchequer, or the price of household articles. . . . Whenever I saw occasion, or could do it without appearing to be intrusive, I joined their parties, and gave my opinion upon the matter in discussion, which, if not always judicious, was always received indulgently. . . .

“Thus I have shown, or tried to show, that opium does not of necessity produce inactivity or torpor ; but that, on the contrary, it often led me into markets and theatres. Yet, in candour I will admit that markets and theatres are not the appropriate haunts of the opium-eater, when in the divinest state incident to his enjoyment. In that state, crowds become an oppression to him ; music, even, too sensual and gross. He naturally seeks solitude and silence, as indispensable conditions of those trances, or profoundest reveries, which are the crown and consummation of what opium can do for human nature.

. . . . Many a time it has happened to me on a summer night—when I have been seated at an open window, from which I could overlook the sea at a mile below me, and could at the same time command a view of some great town standing on a different radius of my circular prospect, but at nearly the same distance—that from sunset to sunrise, all through the hours of night, I have continued motionless, as if frozen, without consciousness of myself as of an object anywise distinct from the multiform scene which I contemplated from above. . . .

It seemed to me as if then first I stood at a distance aloof from the uproar of life ; as if the tumult, the fever, and the strife, were suspended ; a respite were granted from the secret burdens of the heart ; some sabbath of repose ; some resting from human labours.”

In these 'Confessions' opium is first glorified as an angel, and then denounced as a demon. At one time De Quincy exclaims,—

"O just, subtle, and all-conquering opium! that, to the hearts of rich and poor alike, for the wounds that will never heal, and for the pangs of grief that 'tempt the spirit to rebel,' bringest an assuaging balm;—eloquent opium! that with thy potent rhetoric stealest away the purposes of wrath, pleadest effectually for relenting pity, and through one night's heavenly sleep callest back to the guilty man the visions of his infancy, and hands washed pure from blood;—O just and righteous opium! that to the chancery of dreams summonest, for the triumphs of despairing innocence, false witnesses; and confoundest perjury; and dost reverse the sentences of unrighteous judges;—thou buildest upon the bosom of darkness, out of the fantastic imagery of the brain, cities and temples, beyond the art of Phidias and Praxiteles—beyond the splendours of Babylon and Hekatompylos; and, 'from the anarchy of dreaming sleep,' callest into sunny light the faces of long-buried beauties and the blessed household countenances, cleansed from the 'dishonours of the grave.' Thou only givest these gifts to man; and thou hast the keys of Paradise, O just, subtle, and mighty opium!"

At another time, after confessing that for two years he had shrunk from all study with a sense of powerless and infantine feebleness, De Quincy says:—

"In thus describing and illustrating my intellectual torpor, I use terms that apply, more or less, to every part of the years during which I was under the Circean spells of opium. But for misery and suffering I might, indeed, be said to have existed in a dormant state. . . . This part of the case is one which the opium-eater will find in the end most oppressive and tormenting, from the sense of incapacity and feebleness, from

the direct embarrassments incident to the neglect or procrastination of each day's appropriate labours, and from the remorse which must often exasperate the stings of these evils to a conscientious mind. The opium-eater loses none of his moral sensibilities or aspirations; he wishes and longs as earnestly as ever to realise what he believes possible, and feels to be exacted by duty; but his intellectual apprehension of what is possible infinitely outruns his power, not of execution only, but even of proposing or willing. He lies under a world's weight of incubus and nightmare; he lies in sight of all that he would fain perform, just as a man forcibly confined to his bed by the mortal languor of paralysis, who is compelled to witness injury or outrage offered to some object of his tenderest love:—he would lay down his life if he might but rise and walk; but he is powerless as an infant, and cannot so much as make an effort to move."

With this variety in his feelings towards the drug which had become his tyrant, it is not to be wondered at that De Quincy should have acted in the capricious manner which he thus describes:—

"I had become too uneasy under the consciousness of that intensely artificial condition into which I had imperceptibly lapsed through unprecedented quantities of opium; the shadows of eclipse were too dark and lurid not to rouse and alarm me into a spasmodic effort for reconquering the ground which I had lost. Such an effort I made: every step by which I had gone astray did I patiently unthread. And thus I fought off the natural and spontaneous catastrophe, whatever *that* might be, which mighty Nature would else have let loose for redressing the wrongs offered to herself. But what followed? In six or eight months more, upon fresh movements arising of insupportable nervous irritation, I fled back into the same opium lull. To and fro, up and down, did I tilt upon those moun-

tainous seas for year after year. 'See-saw, like Margery Daw, that sold her bed, and lay on straw.' Even so did I, led astray perhaps by the classical example of Miss Daw, sea-saw for year after year, out and in, of manœuvres the most intricate, dances the most elaborate, receding or approaching round my great central sun of opium. Sometimes I ran perilously close into my perihelion ; sometimes I became frightened, and wheeled off into a vast cometary aphelion, where for six months 'opium' was a word unknown. How Nature stood all these sea-sawings is quite a mystery to me : I must have led her a sad life in those days. Nervous irritation forced me at times upon frightful excesses ; but terror from anomalous symptoms sooner or later forced me back."

The most terrible of the terrors caused by the abuse of opium were the nightly visions by which De Quincy was haunted. That he was peculiarly liable to all such mental phenomena as dreams and visions is evident from his earliest reminiscences. After the death of his little sister, when he had stolen in by himself to see her once more, he fell into a kind of trance:—

"A vault seemed to open in the zenith of the far blue sky, a shaft which ran up for ever. I, in spirit, rose as if on billows that also ran up the shaft for ever ; and the billows seemed to pursue the throne of God ; but *that* also ran before us, and fled away continually. The flight and the pursuit seemed to go on for ever and ever. Frost gathering frost, some Sarsar wind of death seemed to repel me ; some mighty relation between God and death dimly struggled to evolve itself from the dreadful antagonism between them ; shadowy meanings even yet continue to exercise and torment in dreams the deciphering oracle within me. I slept—for how long I cannot say ; slowly I recovered my self-possession, and when I woke, found myself standing as before, close to my sister's bed."

Another vision was evoked, at the same period, by the painted windows in the church to which the child went with his family :—

“The *sides* of the window were rich with storied glass ; through the deep purples and crimsons streamed the golden light ; emblazonries of heavenly illumination (from the sun) mingling with the earthly emblazonries (from art and its gorgeous colouring) of what is grandest in man. *There* were the apostles that had trampled upon earth, and the glories of earth, out of celestial love to man. *There* were the martyrs that had borne witness to the truth through flames, through torments, and through armies of fierce, insulting faces. *There* were the saints who, under intolerable pangs, had glorified God by meek submission to his will. And all the time, whilst this tumult of sublime memorials held on as the deep chords from some accompaniment in the bass, I saw through the wide central field of the window, where the glass was *uncoloured*, white, fleecy clouds sailing over the azure depths of the sky ; were it but a fragment or a hint of such a cloud, immediately under the flash of my sorrow-haunted eye, it grew and shaped itself into visions of beds with white lawny curtains ; and in the beds lay sick children, dying children, that were tossing in anguish and weeping clamorously for death. God, for some mysterious reason, could not suddenly release them from their pain ; but he suffered the beds, as it seemed, to rise slowly through the clouds ; slowly the beds ascended into the chambers of the air ; slowly also his arms descended from the heavens, that he and his young children, whom in Paradise, once and for ever he had blessed, though they *must* pass slowly through the dreadful chasm of separation, might yet meet the sooner.”

Both these visions, with the attendant circumstances, were repeated after twelve years, when De Quincy had begun the use of opium. After fifty years, also, this affliction of his childhood was the subject of one

of his opium-dreams. It is not surprising that a brain naturally so over-active as that of De Quincy should have been affected in a remarkable manner by his fatal indulgence. We will quote a few of the many "shadowy terrors that settled and brooded over" his "whole waking life."

"Whatsoever I happened to call up and to trace by a voluntary act upon the darkness was very apt to transfer itself to my dreams; and at length I feared to exercise this faculty, for, as Midas turned all things to gold that yet baffled his hopes and defrauded his human desires, so whatsoever things capable of being visually represented I did but think of in the darkness, immediately shaped themselves into phantoms for the eye; and by a process apparently no less inevitable, when thus once traced in faint and visionary colours, like writings in sympathetic ink, they were drawn out by the fierce chemistry of my dreams into insufferable splendour that fretted my heart.

"This, and all other changes in my dreams were accompanied by deep-seated anxiety and funereal melancholy, such as are wholly incommunicable by words. I seemed every night to descend—not metaphorically, but literally to descend—into chasms and sunless abysses, depths below depths, from which it seemed hopeless that I could ever re-ascend. Nor did I by waking feel that I *had* reascended. . . .

"The sense of space, and in the end the sense of time, were both powerfully affected. Buildings, landscapes, &c., were exhibited in proportions so vast as the bodily eye is not fitted to receive. Space swelled, and was amplified to a sense of unutterable and self-repeating infinity. This disturbed me very much less than the vast expansion of time. Sometimes I seemed to have lived for seventy or a hundred years in one night; nay, sometimes had feelings representative of a duration far beyond the limits of any human experience. . . .

"And now came a tremendous change, which, unfolding

itself slowly like a scroll, through many months, promised an abiding torment ; and, in fact, it never left me, though recurring more or less intermittingly. Hitherto the human face had often mixed in my dreams, but not despotically, nor with any special power of tormenting. But now that affection, which I have called the tyranny of the human face, began to unfold itself. . . . Now it was that upon the rocking waters of the ocean the human face began to reveal itself ; the sea appeared paved with innumerable faces, upturned to the heavens ; faces imploring, wrathful, despairing ; faces that surged upwards by thousands, by myriads, by generations : infinite was my agitation ; my mind tossed, as it seemed, upon the billowy ocean and weltered upon the weltering waves."

Then came what he terms his " Oriental dreams, which," he says,—

" filled me always with such amazement at the monstrous scenery, that horror seemed absorbed for a while in sheer astonishment. Sooner or later came a reflux of feeling that swallowed up the astonishment, and left me, not so much in terror as in hatred and abomination of what I saw."

What he saw was certainly calculated to produce astonishment and horror:—

" Under the connecting feeling of tropical heat and vertical sunlights, I brought together all creatures, birds, beasts, reptiles, all trees and plants, usages and appearances, that are found in all tropical regions, and assembled them together in China or Hindostan. From kindred feelings, I soon brought Egypt and her gods under the same law. I was stared at, hooted at, grinned at, chattered at, by monkeys, by paroquets, by cockatoos. I ran into pagodas, and was fixed for centuries at the summit, or in secret rooms ; I was the idol ; I was the

priest ; I was worshipped ; I was sacrificed. I fled from the wrath of Brama through all the forests of Asia ; Vishnu hated me ; Seeva lay in wait for me. I came suddenly upon Isis and Osiris ; I had done a deed, they said, which the ibis and the crocodile trembled at. Thousands of years I lived and was buried in stone coffins, with mummies and sphinxes, in narrow chambers at the heart of eternal pyramids. I was kissed, with cancerous kisses, by crocodiles, and was laid, confounded with all unutterable abortions, amongst reeds and Nilotic mud. . . . The cursed crocodile became to me the object of more horror than all the rest. . . . So often did this hideous reptile haunt my dreams, that many times the very same dream was broken up in the very same way. I heard gentle voices speaking to me (I hear everything when I am sleeping), and instantly I awoke ; it was broad noon, and my children were standing, hand in hand, at my bedside, come to show me their coloured shoes, or new frocks, or to let me see them dressed for going out. No experience was so awful to me, and at the same time so pathetic, as this abrupt transition from the darkness of the infinite to the gaudy summer air of highest noon, and from the unutterable abortions of miscreated gigantic vermin to the sight of infancy, and innocent *human* natures."

These dreams made sleep almost unendurable.

"Now, at last, I had become awe-struck at the approach of sleep, under the condition of visions so afflicting, and so intensely life-like as those which persecuted my phantom-haunted brain. . . . Either way it seemed as though death had, in military language, 'thrown himself astride of my path.' Nothing short of mortal anguish, in a physical sense, it seemed, to wean myself from opium ; yet, on the other hand, death through overwhelming nervous terrors—death by brain-fever or by lunacy—seemed too certainly to besiege the alternative course.

Fortunately I had still so much of firmness left as to face that choice, which, with most of instant suffering, showed in the far distance a possibility of final escape.

“ This possibility was realised : I *did* accomplish my escape. . . . I triumphed. But infer not, reader, from this word ‘ triumphed,’ a condition of joy or exultation. Think of me as of one, even when four months had passed, still agitated, writhing, throbbing, palpitating, shattered, and much, perhaps, in the situation of him who has been racked. . . . During the whole period of diminishing the opium, I had the torments of a man passing out of one mode of existence into another, and liable to the mixed or the alternate pains of birth and death. The issue was not death, but a sort of physical regeneration, and I may add, that ever since, at intervals, I have had a restoration of more than youthful spirits.”

In spite of this assertion, the ‘ Confessions ’ leave us very doubtful whether De Quincy ever did entirely relinquish the use of opium ; and Mrs. Gordon positively asserts that he did not. The biographer of ‘ Christopher North ’ is no mean authority with regard to her father’s intimate friend, and the “ sharer of his purse.” She has little faith in De Quincy’s pictures of himself, of which she says,—“ Those beautiful writings of his captivate the mind, and would fain invite the reader to believe that the man they represent is De Quincy himself. But not even in the ‘ Autobiography ’ is his *personnel* to be found. He indeed knew how to analyse the human heart through all its deep windings, but in return he offered no key of access to his own.” Such a key may perhaps be found in a thought often dwelt upon by the Rev. F. W. Robertson, of Brighton, which we venture to quote from one of his lectures :—“ In all there is an Adam and a Christ—an ideal and a real. Numberless instances will occur to us in the daily experience of life ; the fact is shown, for example, in the strange discrepancy often seen between the writings of the poet or the sermons of the preacher, and their actual lives. And yet in this there is no necessary hypocrisy, for the one represents the man’s *aspiration*, the other his attainment.”

The following account of himself, written by De Quincy to Professor

Wilson, from London in 1825, has more of the *real* than of the *ideal* in it, and will supply us with a suggestive conclusion to the unhappily misdirected course which we have faintly traced :—

“ As to myself—though I have written not as one who labours under much depression of mind—the fact is, I *do* so. At this time calamity presses upon me with a heavy hand. I am quite free of opium ; but it has left the liver, which is the Achilles’ heel of almost every human fabric, subject to affections which are tremendous for the weight of wretchedness attached to them. To fence with these with the one hand, and with the other to maintain the war with the wretched business of hack author, with all its horrible degradations, is more than I am able to bear. At this moment I have not a place to hide my head in. Something I meditate—I know not what—‘Itaque e conspectu omnium abiit.’ With a good publisher, and leisure to premeditate what I write, I might yet liberate myself ; after which, having paid everybody, I would slink into some dark corner, educate my children, and show my face in the world no more.

“ If you should ever have occasion to write to me, it will be best to address your letter either ‘to the care of Mrs. De Quincy, Rydal Nab, Westmoreland’ (Fox Ghyll is sold, and will be given up in a few days), or ‘to the care of M. D. Hill, Esq., 11, King’s Bench Walk, Temple ;’ but for the present I think rather to the latter, for else suspicions will arise that I am in Westmoreland, which, if I were not, might be serviceable to me ; but if, as I am in hopes of accomplishing sooner or later, I should be, might defeat my purpose.”

CHAPTER IX.

PRIVATE LETTERS OF JUNIUS TO
HENRY SAMPSON WOODFALL.

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THERE was published, in 1839, an agreeable volume, entitled 'Letters of Eminent Persons; selected and illustrated by Robert Aris Wilmot, Esq., Trinity College, Cambridge.' This book has in no respect served as a model for my present undertaking, for, as I have stated in my preface to the first volume:—"Half-hours with the best Letter-writers and Autobiographers' aspires to be more than a selection of interesting and brief extracts, with introductory notices. Wherever it may be possible letters of one person, or of several correspondents, will be grouped together, so as to develope some connected story, or exhibit some leading sentiment or habitual thought." Without further remark upon this essential difference in the general character of the two works, I venture to point out what I conceive to be an editorial mistake on the part of Mr. Wilmot. Eight pages of his volume (pp. 258-266) are occupied by Letter LXVII. of the series—'Junius to the Duke of Bedford. Indignant Condemnation of his Conduct.' Why, it may be asked, amidst the numerous victims of the 'Cobra touch' of Junius, should the Duke of Bedford be selected to stand conspicuous between Letter LXVI.—'Hannah More to her Sister'—and Letter LXVIII.—'Edmund Burke to the Painter Barry.' There was a time when Burke was held to be Junius—which he spontaneously denied to Johnson;—but that notion has long since passed away, and the juxtaposition of the letter of Junius to a letter of Burke, as given by Mr. Wilmot, could not have been meant to revive that calumny against one of our greatest men. Calumny I must call it; for the vigour of intellect can never compensate for the malevolence of the anonymous assassin.

In the present chapter I propose to give some of the private letters of the author of 'Junius' to Henry Sampson Woodfall, the printer of 'The Public Advertiser.' I shall do so rather with a view to exhibit

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some of the differences between the journalism of the present day and that of a century ago. The subject has acquired a new interest, by the recent publication of two bulky volumes entitled 'Memoirs of Sir Philip Francis, K.C.B., with Correspondence and Journals. Commenced by the late Joseph Parkes, Esq. Completed and Edited by Herman Merivale, M.A.' The object of this elaborate work is to prove, by an exhaustive process, the theory, of which the late Mr. John Taylor was the original propounder, that Francis and Junius were identical. I have no desire to engage in a discussion upon this controverted question, or to enter on the subject, except incidentally, as to the authorship of Junius. The opposite notion to that of Mr. Parkes and Mr. Merivale has been very ably argued in a tract entitled 'More about Junius, by A. Hayward, Esq. Q.C.' I regard Junius, whether he were a man of high rank and influence, or a clerk in the War Office, as a phenomenon that can never re-appear in the present state of *British* society, in which the decencies of journalism, and the proper relations of an editor with his correspondents, are better understood and practised than in the early days of George III.

Henry Sampson Woodfall, the Printer of 'The Public Advertiser,' was the grandson of the first of that celebrated family, who for a long series of years filled a conspicuous place in the annals of typography. Of his grandfather, Henry Woodfall, I have thus made mention in my 'Shadows of the Old Booksellers':—"He was working as a journeyman to one of Pope's printers, when the great poet, who was kind to most persons except poor authors, recognised his abilities and knowledge, and helped him to go into business for himself, as he did Robert Dodsley." The industry and abilities of the grandfather seem to have descended to his two grandsons, Henry Sampson, and William. The younger, William, was known in his day as "Memory Woodfall," from the remarkable circumstance that, at a time when no reporter was permitted to use pen or pencil in the House of Lords, he could carry away in his retentive mind, not only the substance of a long debate, but the sentences of particular speakers. Henry Sampson is recorded by Mr. Nichols to have been born at the Rose and Crown, in Little Britain, on the 21st June, 1739, and was early distinguished by a precocity which attracted the notice of the great writer who had patronised his grandfather. Under the care of this grandfather he acquired the first rudiments of his education, "and before he had attained his fifth year had the honour of receiving from Pope half-

a-crown, for reading to him, with much fluency, a page of Homer in the Greek language." His education was at first entrusted to a school-master at Twickenham, from whose charge, when little more than eleven years of age, he was removed to St. Paul's. Here he became a school-contemporary of Philip Francis, with whose name his memory has of late years become associated. His father, who carried on the business of a printer in Paternoster Row, was a publisher and part proprietor of 'The Public Advertiser,' which held the highest rank among the journals of the early years of George III. "At the age of nineteen," says Mr. Nichols, "was committed to him the business of editing and printing 'The Public Advertiser,' though his name did not appear till 1760." Henry Sampson Woodfall had thus, in his early manhood, acquired something of that knowledge and experience which fitted him to steer his course with tolerable safety amidst the dangers which surrounded the journalist in the days when party spirit ran so high as to call into being the most dreaded of the anonymous writers, before whose assaults the highest in dignity and power were, for the most part, terror-stricken.

Without further preface I shall print a few of the private letters of Junius to Henry Sampson Woodfall, reserving to myself the privilege of afterwards pointing out some of their characteristics, as indicating the contrasts between the journalism of a century ago and that of our own times.

PRIVATE LETTERS OF JUNIUS TO MR. H. S. WOODFALL.

(Mr. Bohn's excellent edition of Junius contains sixty-four of these private letters to Woodfall. To those who are curious to trace the progress of a correspondence of which the first letter is dated April 20th, 1769, and the last March 7th, 1773, the collection will furnish many points of historical interest in connection with the explanatory notes appended to many of them.)

" Sunday, August 6, 1769.

"SIR,—The spirit of your letter convinces me that you are a much better writer than most of the people whose works you

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publish. Whether you have guessed well or ill must be left to our future acquaintance. For the matter of assistance, be assured that, if a question should arise upon any writings of mine, you shall not want it. Yet you see how things go, and I fear my assistance would not avail you much. For the other points of printing, &c., it does not depend upon us at present. My own works you shall constantly have, and in point of money be assured you shall never suffer. I wish the inclosed to be announced to-morrow *conspicuously* for Tuesday. I am not capable of writing anything more finished. Your friend, C.

"Your *Veridicus* is Mr. Whitworth. I assure you I have not confided in him."

(Private.)

"September 10, 1769.

"SIR,—The last letter you printed was idle and improper, and I assure you printed against my own opinion. The truth is, there are people about me whom I wish not to contradict, and who had rather see Junius in the papers ever so improperly than not at all. I wish it could be recalled. Suppose you were to say—*We have some reason to suspect that the last letter signed Junius in this paper, was not written by the real Junius, though the observation escaped us at the time;* or, if you can hit off anything yourself more plausible, you will much oblige me, but without a positive assertion. Don't let it be the same day with the inclosed. Begging your pardon for this trouble, I remain your friend and humble servant, C."

"Thursday Night, October 5, 1769.

"I shall be glad to see the packet you speak of. It cannot come from the Cavendishes, though there be no end of the family. They would not be so silly as to put their arms on

the cover. As to me, be assured that it is not in the nature of things that they, or you, or anybody else, should ever know me, unless I make myself known. All arts, or inquiries, or rewards would be equally ineffectual.

“As to *you*, it is clearly my opinion that you have nothing to fear from the Duke of Bedford. I reserve some things expressly to awe him, in case he should think of bringing you before the House of Lords. I am sure I can threaten him privately with such a storm, as would make him tremble even in his grave. You may send to-morrow to the same place without farther notice; and if you have anything of your own to communicate, I shall be glad to hear it. C.”

(Private.)

“*Beginning of February, 1770.*

“SIR,—When you consider to what excessive enmities I may be exposed, you will not wonder at my caution. I really have not known how to procure your last. If it be not of any great moment I would wish you to recall it. If it be, give me a hint. If your affair should come to a trial, and you should be found guilty, you will then let me know what expense falls particularly on yourself; for I understand you are engaged with other proprietors. Some way or other *you* shall be reimbursed. But seriously and *bonâ fide*, I think it is impossible. C.”

“*Monday Evening, November 12, 1770.*

“SIR,—The inclosed, though begun within these few days, has been greatly laboured. It is very correctly copied, and I beg you will take care that it be literally printed as it stands. I don't think you run the least risque. We have got the rascal down; let us strangle him if it be possible. This paper should properly have appeared to-morrow, but I could not compass it,

so let it be announced to-morrow, and printed Wednesday. If you should have any fears, I entreat you to send it early enough to Miller to appear to-morrow night in the *London Evening Post*. In that case, you will oblige me by informing the public to-morrow, in *your own paper*, that a real *Junius* will appear at night in the *London*. Miller, I am sure, will have no scruples.

“ Lord Mansfield has thrown the ministry into confusion by suddenly resigning the office of Speaker of the House of Lords.”

“ *Thursday, January 31, 1771.*

“ The paper is extremely well printed, and has a great effect. It is of the utmost importance to the public cause that the doors of the House of Lords should be opened on Tuesday next. Perhaps the following may help to shame them into it.

“ We hear that the Ministry intend to move for opening the doors of both Houses of Parliament on Tuesday next, in the usual manner, being desirous that the nation should be exactly informed of their whole conduct in the business of Falkland Island.”

(*Next Day.*)

“ The nation expect that on Tuesday, at least, both Houses will be open as usual ; otherwise there will be too much reason to suspect that the proceedings of the Ministry have been such as will not bear a public discussion.

“ We hear that the Ministry intend to move that no gentleman may be refused admittance into either House on Tuesday next. Lord North in particular thinks it touches his character to have no part of his conduct concealed from the nation.

“ The resolution of the Ministry to move for opening both Houses on Tuesday next does them great honour. If they

were to do otherwise it would raise and justify suspicions very disadvantageous to their own reputation, and to the King's honour. Pray keep it up."

" February 21, 1771.

" SIR,—It will be very difficult, if not impracticable for me to get your note. I presume it relates to *Vindex*. I leave it to you to alter or omit as you think proper; or burn it. I think the argument about Gibraltar, &c., is too good to be lost. As to the satirical part, I must tell you (and with positive certainty) that our gracious — is as callous as a stockfish to everything but the reproach of *cowardice*. That alone is able to set the humours afloat. After a paper of that kind he won't eat meat for a week.

" You may rely upon it the Ministry are sick of prosecutions. Those against Junius cost the Treasury above six thousand pounds, and after all they got nothing but disgrace. After the paper you have printed to-day (signed Brutus), one would think you feared nothing. For my own part, I can very truly assure you that nothing would afflict me more than to have drawn you into personal danger, because it admits of no recompense. A little expense is not to be regarded, and I hope these papers have reimbursed you. I never will send you anything that I think dangerous, but the risque is yours, and you must determine for yourself.

" All the above is private."

TO MR. DAVID GARRICK.

" November 10, 1771.

" I am very exactly informed of your impertinent inquiries, and of the information you so busily *sent* to Richmond, and with what triumph and exultation it was received. I knew.

every particular of it the *next day*. Now mark me, vagabond. Keep to your pantomimes, or be assured you shall hear of it. Meddle no more, thou busy informer! It is in *my* power to make you curse the hour in which you dared to interfere with
JUNIUS."

"I would send the above to Garrick directly, but that I would avoid having this hand too commonly seen. Oblige me, then, so much as to have it copied in any hand, and sent by the penny post, that is, if you dislike sending it in your own writing. I must be more cautious than ever. I am sure I should not survive a discovery three days; or, if I did, they would attain me by bill. Change to the *Somerset Coffee House*, and let no mortal know the alteration. I am persuaded you are too honest a man to contribute in any way to my *destruction*. Act honourably by me, and at a proper time you shall know me."

" *November 27, 1771.*

"The postscript to Titus must be omitted. I did never question your understanding. Far otherwise. The Latin word *simplex* conveys to me an amiable character, and never denotes folly. Though we may not be deficient in point of capacity, it is very possible that neither of us may be cunning enough for Mr. Garrick. But with a sound heart, be assured you are better gifted, even for worldly happiness, than if you had been cursed with the abilities of a Mansfield. After long experience of the world, I affirm before God I never knew a rogue who was not unhappy."

" *December 17th, 1771.*

"Make your mind easy about me. I believe you are an honest man, and I never am angry. Say to-morrow, 'We are

desired to inform Scævola that his private note was received with the most profound indifference and contempt.' I see his design. The Duke of Grafton has been long labouring to detach Camden. This Scævola is the wretchedest of fools, and dirty knave.

"Upon no account, nor for any reason whatsoever, are you to write to me until I give you notice.

"When the book is finished, let me have a set bound in vellum, gilt, and lettered Junius 1, 2, as handsomely as you can. The edges gilt. Let the sheets be well dried before binding. I must also have two sets in blue paper covers. This is all the fee I shall ever desire of you. I think you ought not to publish before the second week in January.

"The *London Packet* is not worth our notice. I suspect Garrick, and I would have you hint so to him."

"January 6, 1772.

"I have a thing to mention to you in great confidence. I expect your assistance, and rely upon your secrecy.

"There is a long paper ready for publication, but which must not appear until the morning of the meeting of Parliament, nor be announced in any shape whatsoever. Much depends upon its appearing unexpectedly. If you receive it on the 8th or 9th instant, can you in a day or two have it composed, and two proof-sheets struck off and sent me; and can you keep the press standing ready for the *Public Advertiser* of the 21st, and can all this be done with such secrecy that none of your people shall know what is going forward, except the composer, and can you rely on *his* fidelity? Consider of it, and if it be possible, say YES in your paper to-morrow.

"I think it will take four full columns at the least, but I undertake that it shall sell. It is essential that I should have a proof-sheet, and correct it myself.

“Let me know if the books are ready, that I may tell you what to do with them.”

“*Thursday, March 5, 1772.*

“Your letters with the books are come safe to hand. The difficulty of corresponding arises from situation and necessity, to which we must submit. Be assured I will not give you more trouble than is unavoidable. If the vellum books are not yet bound, I would wait for the index. If they are, let me know by a line in the P. A. When they are ready, they may safely be left at the same place as last night.

“On *your* account I was alarmed at the price of the book. But of the sale of books I am no judge, and can only pray for your success. What you say about the profit is very handsome. I like to deal with such men. As for myself, be assured that I am far above all pecuniary views, and no other person, I think, has any claim to share with you. Make the most of it, therefore, and let all your views in life be directed to a solid, however moderate, independence. Without it no man can be happy, or even honest.”

The most material points of the comment I propose to make upon the private letters of Junius to Woodfall have been anticipated by me in my ‘Popular History of England,’ vol. vi., pp. 296 and 298. The reader will, I trust, pardon my thus quoting from my own writing, in a work which has been extensively circulated, but which may not be in the power of some whom I now address, conveniently to refer to:—“In noticing, perhaps more fully than they intrinsically deserve, the ‘Letters of Junius,’ it is our chief duty to regard them as bearing upon and in connection with the history of their time. There can be no doubt that they had some influence upon the movements of parties; terrified a few persons of high station; made others more obstinate in their contempt even of the truths uttered by a systematic libeller. That they produced any real and permanent benefit to the country can scarcely be pretended even by those who shut their eyes to the mon-

strous evil of that system of personality which they carried to its utmost limit—a system which was the disgrace of the literature of that period, and which only died out when anonymous writers accepted their position of secrecy as one that imposed as heavy, perhaps heavier, responsibilities than belonged to acknowledged authorship. Junius waged no chivalric war. In ‘complete steel’ he was fighting with naked men. Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, amongst his gossiping anecdotes, says that Mr. Bradshaw, the Secretary of the Treasury, made no secret ‘of the agony into which the Duke of Grafton was thrown by these productions. Such was their effect and operation on his mind as sometimes utterly to incapacitate him during whole days for the ministerial duties of his office.’ It was ‘the venom of the shaft, rather than the vigour of the bow,’ which made the prime minister sink ‘as a sick girl’ under these skin-deep wounds from a foe in ambush.”

The following remarks from the same work have more direct regard to the private letters of Junius to the Printer of ‘The Public Advertiser’ :—“Had he any real principles? He was not a politician in the higher sense of the word. He had some selfish ambition to gratify. He had some private grievance to revenge. He might be a writing puppet moved by some one of higher mark—a Francis or a Dyer prompted by a Temple. He might be a man of noble birth mining like a mole; whose vanity was gratified by the notoriety which he commanded—pleased with acquiring another self-consciousness than that which belonged to his proper person. Whoever he was, he had essentially a paltry mind. He had not the mind of any man that had won or was winning a great name—a Chatham or a Burke, even a Barré or a Shelburne. He was a ‘good hater;’ but his dislikes had more of the real meanness than of the false grandeur of hatred. His true nature was disclosed in his private letters to his printer. Of Mansfield, the Lord Chief Justice, he says, ‘I will never rest till I have destroyed or expelled that wretch.’ Mr. Chamier, a member of the club which Johnson, Reynolds, Burke and Goldsmith made illustrious, is ‘to be run down’ to annoy Lord Barrington, the Secretary at War, who had appointed him his deputy. With the airs of an aristocrat he writes to Garrick,—‘Mark me, vagabond. Keep to your pantomimes, or be assured you shall hear of it.’ With the determination of an assassin, he says of the Duke of Bedford, ‘I am sure I can threaten him privately with such a storm as would make him tremble even in his grave.’ In consonance with his whole system he recommends Wood-

fall to deny the authenticity of one of his letters which had been printed : 'Suppose you were to say—We have some reason to suspect that the last letter signed Junius in this paper was not written by the real Junius.' To show how the coward trembled even in his triple armour of concealment, we have only to quote from one letter to his publisher : —'I must be more cautious than ever. I am sure I should not survive a discovery three days; or, if I did, they would attaint me by bill. I am persuaded you are too honest a man to contribute in any way to my destruction.' Attaint him by bill! as if he were a Bolingbroke or an Ormonde. He was a man of rank, and had their penalties of forfeiture in his mind according to the belief of one ('Quarterly Review,' vol. xc. p. 101) who has looked carefully into the subject. In our view the fear of attainder was only one of the many pretences by which an inordinately vain man sought to raise his personal importance in the eyes of the humble friend to whom he left all the real peril consequent upon his own audacity. 'I hope these papers have reimbursed you. I never will send you anything that I think dangerous; but the risque is yours and you must determine for yourself.'

In the first extract from 'The Popular History,' I have said that a system which was a disgrace to the literature of the period "died out when anonymous writers accepted their position of secrecy as one that imposed as heavy, perhaps heavier, responsibilities than belonged to acknowledged authorship." But the higher character of the journalism of the present time has provided a surer safeguard against the abuses of anonymous writing than the conscientious scruples of the writer himself. No editor of any newspaper of character will now print an anonymous contribution—especially one involving possible calumnies against individuals—except the real name of the correspondent be confidentially disclosed. It appears tolerably certain, from the work of Mr. Parkes and Mr. Merivale, that the writer of the 'Letters of Junius' was unknown to Henry Sampson Woodfall, and after the lapse of nearly a century the secret had never transpired. Junius had promised his printer some pecuniary remuneration for the expenses which fell upon himself in the legal proceedings which arose out of the 'Address to the King.' He left him to reimburse himself out of the profits of a collected edition of the Letters, which several other publishers were reprinting. He said, "you shall one day know me," but that promise seems also to have been broken. Let me console all those ambitious young men, who may fancy that it was a fine thing to revel in scandal

and sarcasm, by the consideration "*Le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle*," and that, although the fame of Sir Philip Francis has recently called forth two volumes, that work has only gone somewhat further in establishing the belief that Junius was a worthless scoundrel.

I might complete this chapter with a selection from the letters of Sir Philip Francis, as given by Mr. Parkes and Mr. Merivale, but there are two letters of this personage to Mr. Burke which are printed in the 'Correspondence of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke,' published in four volumes in 1844. Philip Francis went to India, in 1774, as one of the civil members in council for the Government of Bengal, and remained in that country till 1780, when he resigned his situation and returned to England. The cause of his resignation was a quarrel with the Governor-General, Mr. Hastings, which produced a duel in which Francis was shot through the body. Mr. Francis became a member of Parliament in 1784; although it was not thought decorous that he should become one of the managers of the impeachment of Hastings. His Indian experience, no less than his personal hatred of the Governor-General, made him a powerful ally in the impeachment of Hastings. The letter which I now print may either serve to establish the belief that Francis was Junius, or to show that in his latter years the malignity and insolence that characterised that writer had become the model of a clever imitator. It required even more than the impudence of a Junius to say to Burke, with regard to one of his most finished compositions, that it was "very loosely put together;" and in a second letter to presume to become the teacher of one of the greatest masters of our language by saying, "Once for all, let me persuade you to write English!"

PHILIP FRANCIS, ESQ., TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
EDMUND BURKE.

"February 19th, 1790.

"MY DEAR MR. BURKE,—I am sorry you should have had the trouble of sending for the printed paper you lent me yesterday, though I own I cannot much regret even a fault of my own that helps to delay the publication of that paper. I know

with certainty that I am the only friend, and many there are, who ventures to contradict or oppose you face to face on subjects of this nature. They either care too little for *you*, or too much for *themselves*, to run the risk of giving you immediate offence, for the sake of any subsequent or remote advantage you might derive from it. But what they withhold from *you*, they communicate very liberally to me, because they think or pretend I have some influence over you, which I have not, but which on the present occasion I most devoutly wish I had. I am not afraid of exasperating you against me at any given moment, because I know you will cool again, and place it all to the right account.

“It is the proper province, and ought to be the privilege of an inferior to criticise and advise. The best possible critic of the *Iliad* would be, *ipso facto*, and by virtue of that very character, incapable of being the author of it. Standing, as I do, in this relation to you, you would renounce your superiority, if you refused to be advised by me.

“Waving all discussion concerning the substance and general tendency of this printed letter, I must declare my opinion, that what I have seen of it is very loosely put together. In point of writing, at least, the manuscript you showed me first was much less exceptionable. Remember that this is one of the most singular, and that it may be the most distinguished, and ought to be one of the most deliberate acts of your life. Your writings have hitherto been the delight and instruction of your own country. You now undertake to correct and instruct another nation; and your appeal in effect is to all Europe. Allowing you the liberty to do so in an extreme case, you cannot deny that it ought to be done with special deliberation in the choice of the topics, and with no less care and circumspection in the use you make of them. Have you thoroughly considered whether it be worthy of Mr. Burke—of a Privy Coun-

cillor—of a man so high and considerable in the House of Commons as you are, and holding the station you have obtained in the opinion of the world, to enter into a war of pamphlets with Dr. Price? If he answered you, as assuredly he will (and so will many others), can you refuse to reply to a person whom you have attacked? If you do, you are defeated in a battle of your own provoking, and driven to fly from ground of your own choosing. If you do not, where is such a contest to lead you, but into a vile and disgraceful, though it were ever so victorious, an altercation? '*Dii meliora.*' But if you will do it, away with all jest, and sneer, and sarcasm; let everything you say be grave, direct, and serious. In a case so interesting as the errors of a great nation, and the calamities of great individuals, and feeling them so deeply, as you profess to do, all manner of insinuation is improper, all gibe and nickname prohibited. In my opinion, all that you say of the Queen is pure foppery. If she be a perfect female character, you ought to take your ground upon her virtues. If she be the reverse, it is ridiculous in any but a lover to place her personal charms in opposition to her crimes. Either way, I know the argument must proceed upon a supposition; for neither have you said anything to establish her moral merits, nor have her accusers formally tried and convicted her of guilt. On this subject, however, you cannot but know that the opinion of the world is not lately, but has been many years, decided. But in effect, when you assert her claim to protection and respect, on no other topics than those of gallantry, and beauty, and personal accomplishments, you virtually abandon the proof and assertion of her innocence, which you know is the point substantially in question. Pray, sir, how long have you felt yourself so desperately disposed to admire the ladies of Germany? I despise and abhor, as much as you can do, all personal insult and outrage, even to guilt itself, if I see it, where it ought to be,

dejected and helpless ; but it is in vain to expect that I, or any reasonable man, shall regret the sufferings of a Messalina, as I should those of a Mrs. Crewe or a Mrs. Burke ; I mean all that is beautiful or virtuous amongst women. Is it nothing but outside ? Have they no moral minds ? Or are you such a determined champion of beauty as to draw your sword in defence of any jade upon earth provided she is handsome ? Look back, I beseech you, and deliberate a little before you determine that this is an office that perfectly becomes you. If I stop here, it is not for want of a multitude of objections. The mischief you are going to do yourself is, to my apprehension, palpable. It is visible. It will be audible. I snuff it in the wind. I taste it already. I feel it in every sense, and so will you hereafter ; when, I vow to God (a most elegant phrase), it will be no sort of consolation for me to reflect that I did everything in my power to prevent it. I wish you were at the devil for giving me all this trouble, and so farewell !

“ P. FRANCIS.”

Extract of a letter from Philip Francis, Esq. to the Right Hon. Edmund Burke, dated November 3rd, 1790, in which he acknowledges to have received the printed copy of ‘*Reflections on the Revolution in France*’ :—

“ Once for all, I wish you would let me teach you to write English. To me, who am to read everything you write, it would be a great comfort, and to you no sort of disparagement. Why will you not allow yourself to be persuaded that polish is material to preservation ? ”

CHAPTER X.

LETTERS OF HANNAH MORE.

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I.—LETTERS OF HANNAH MORE.

THE long life and the voluminous writings which undoubtedly exercised a wide-spread influence over the public mind and manners in the latter half of the last century, are now almost lost sight of amidst the crowd of useful lives and writings which have multiplied since then. Hannah More lived in a transition period between the intellectual torpor of the age when Johnson was a giant, and the restless activity stirred up by the general convulsion attending the French Revolution. She herself saw the progress of this transition, and, when near her eightieth year wrote thus to Wilberforce:

“I cannot help thinking that, independently of religious feelings, it is more worth while, as a matter of mere curiosity, to an inquisitive mind, to be alive now, than at almost any period that history presents to us. I need not enumerate to you the astonishing and prosperous institutions of piety and charity, nor the successful projects of philosophy, mechanics,” &c.

The clear-sighted octogenarian, whilst acknowledging the progress which had been made in many things since her early days, considered that in some directions this progress was beset with dangers. Writing to William Wilberforce in 1823, she says,

“Our poor are now to be made scholars and philosophers. I am not the champion of ignorance, but I own I am alarmed at the violence of the contrast. . . . The poor must not only read English, but ancient history, and even the sciences are to be laid open to them. Now, not to enquire where

would they get the money,—I ask, Where would a labouring man get the time? Time is the fortune of a poor man ; and as to what they would gain from Grecian history, why, they would learn that the meanest citizen of Athens could determine on the merits of a tragedy of Euripides : to do which they must always live in a play-house, as, indeed, they almost always did ; they were such critics in language as to detect a foreign accent in a great philosopher, &c.—and yet history does not speak of a more turbulent, unmanageable, profligate people. . . .

“If you are not quite tired of me and my senilities, I will proceed to a few facts to illustrate my theory. Not only in the great national schools, but in the little paltry cottage seminaries of three-pence a week, I hear of the most ridiculous instances of the affectation of *literature*. A poor little girl of this stamp was in my room one day when a gentleman was sitting with me. He asked her what she was reading at school. ‘Oh, Sir, the whole circle of the sciences!’ ‘Indeed!’ said he; ‘that must be a very large work!’ ‘No, Sir; it is a very little book, it cost half-a-crown.’ My friend smiled, and lamented that what was of such easy attainment had cost him so much time and money. I asked a little girl, a servant’s child, the other day, what she was reading, and if she could say her Catechism. ‘Oh, no, Madam, I am learning *Syntax*.’

“What I am going to add, you will think an exaggeration, if not an invention, but it is a literal fact. A girl in the next parish being asked what she learnt, answered, ‘I learns gogarphy, and the harts and senses.’

“In many schools, I am assured, writing and accounts are taught on Sundays. This is a regular apprenticeship to sin. He who is taught arithmetic when a boy, will, when a man, open his shop on a Sunday. Now, in my poor judgment, all this has a revolutionary as well as irreligious tendency; and

the misfortune is, that the growing ultra-ism on the side of learning, falsely so called, will irritate and inflame the old bigotry, which hugged absolute ignorance as hidden treasure, not to be parted with ; while that sober measure of Christian instruction which lies between the two extremes, will be rejected by both parties."

A year previous to this, Hannah More had written to the Rev. Daniel Wilson in reference to a sermon of his :

" I am glad to see you notice, among other dangers, *light reading*. I have lately reflected much on the alarming increase of this perilous pleasure. I really think it is, at this period, doing more harm than cards ; I mean family cards, not gaming. I would the evil were confined to the worldly and the dissipated : the religious world, of whom I am almost as much afraid as the worldly world (if I may use the expression), are falling much into it. An active, and, I hope, a pious clergyman, told me the other day, that he had just bought a cheap edition of Lord Byron, but boasted that he had burnt Don Juan. I am far from putting Byron and Walter Scott on a level ; the one is an anti-moralist indeed, but surely I may say the other is a non-moralist. His *poetry* I read as it came out with that pleasure and admiration which great talents must always excite ; but I do not remember in it any of those practical precepts or that sound instruction which may be gleaned from some of our older poets ; though they often offended against that decency which Scott invariably observes. I am now reading Prior's 'Solomon,' an exquisite poem, in my opinion, abounding in instruction and beauty ; yet scarcely anybody I meet with has read it. Of the fashionable reading, if there were no other evil than the immense consumption of *time*, the mischief would not be small. Thirty volumes of Walter Scott's novels have in the succession of a very few

years covered every table. Figure to yourself in a large family, where every one reads for himself, the thousands of hours that have been thus swallowed up. In the articles of music, dress, and reading, I could wish to see a somewhat wider separation between the two classes above named. The useful reading, compared with the idle, like our medicine compared with our food, is but as grains to pounds. The evil does not merely consist in the reading itself, but in its disqualifying tendency for that reading which is good. It is not that old age has made me insensible to the charms of genius. In that one respect, I think, I am not grown obtuse. I have been really looking for time to read one or two of Sir Walter Scott's novels."

What would Hannah More have said of the quantity and quality of some of the "light reading" of the present time? Perhaps it is partly owing to the press of ephemeral literature that the name of this once popular writer is now little more than a name, dimly associated with Wilberforce and the abolition of the slave-trade, or with some moral essays, now considered *out-of-date*.

These selections would be incomplete without anything from the untiring pen of this good and clever woman; but she was too practical and unpoetical—in spite of her versifying powers,—to be a very interesting letter-writer. Her letters are chiefly valuable as memorials of her versatile talents, her fine character, and her ceaseless energy. Those written during her earlier years present us with graphic sketches of the gay world which she afterwards endeavoured to reform; whilst her later correspondence introduces us to far different scenes, where her benevolent efforts were crowned with more visible success.

2.—LIFE IN THE FASHIONABLE AND LITERARY WORLD.

Hannah More was nearly thirty at the time of her first introduction into London society, but no girl in her teens could display a keener relish for what she herself terms "the hurry, bustle, dissipation, and nonsensical flutter of a town life." A few extracts from her letters to

her sisters during her annual visits to London will show how her time was passed during the first four or five of these visits.

“ *London, 1774.*

“ I had yesterday the pleasure of dining in Hill Street, Berkeley Square, *at a certain Mrs. Montagu's, a name not totally obscure.* The party consisted of herself, Mrs. Carter, Dr. Johnson, Solander, and Matty, Mrs. Boscawen, Miss Reynolds, and Sir Joshua (the idol of every company) ; some other persons of high rank and less wit, and your humble servant,—a party that would not have disgraced the table of Lælius, or of Atticus. I felt myself a worm, the more a worm for the consequence which was given me, by mixing me with such a society ; but, as I told Mrs. Boscawen, and with great truth, I had an opportunity of making an experiment of my heart, by which I learnt that I was not envious, for I certainly did not repine at being the meanest person in company.

“ Mrs. Montagu received me with the most encouraging kindness ; she is not only the finest genius, but the finest lady I ever saw : she lives in the highest style of magnificence ; her apartments and table are in the most splendid taste : but what baubles are these when speaking of a Montagu ! her form (for she has no *body*) is delicate even to fragility ; her countenance the most animated in the world ; the sprightly vivacity of fifteen, with the judgment and experience of a Nestor. But I fear she is hastening to decay very fast ; her spirits are so active, that they must soon wear out the little frail receptacle that holds them. Mrs. Carter has in her person a great deal of what the gentlemen mean when they say such a one is a ‘poetical lady,’ however, independently of her great talents and learning, I like her much ; she has affability, kindness, and goodness ; and I honour her heart even more than her talents : but I do not like one of them better than Mrs. Boscawen ; she is at once

polite, learned, judicious, and humble, and Mrs. Palk tells me her letters are not thought inferior to Mrs. Montagu's. She regretted (so did I) that so many suns could not possibly shine at one time ; but we are to have a smaller party, where, from fewer luminaries, there may emanate a clearer, steadier, and more beneficial light."

Again in the following year :

"Just returned from spending one of the most agreeable days of my life, with the female Mæcenas of Hill Street ; she engaged me five or six days ago to dine with her, and had assembled half the wits of the age. The only fault that charming woman has, is, that she is fond of collecting too many of them together at one time. There were nineteen persons assembled at dinner ; but after the repast she has a method of dividing her guests, or rather letting them assort themselves into little groups of five or six each. I spent my time in going from one to the other of these little societies, as I happened more or less to like the subjects they were discussing. Mrs. Scott, Mrs. Montagu's sister, a very good writer, Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Barbauld, and a man of letters, whose name I have forgotten, made up one of these little parties. When we had canvassed two or three subjects, I stole off and joined in with the next group, which was composed of Mrs. Montagu, Dr. Johnson, the Provost of Dublin, and two other ingenious men. In this party there was a diversity of opinions, which produced a great deal of good argument and reasoning. There were several other groups less interesting to me, as they were composed more of rank than talent, and it was amusing to see how the people of sentiment singled out each other, and how the fine ladies and pretty gentlemen naturally slid into each other's society.

"I had the happiness to carry Dr. Johnson home from Hill

Street, though Mrs. Montagu publicly declared she did not think it prudent to trust us together, with such a declared affection on both sides. She said she was afraid of a Scotch elopement. He has invited himself to drink tea with us to-morrow, that we may read Sir Eldred * together. I shall not tell you what he said of it; but to me the best part of his flattery was, that he repeats all the best stanzas by heart, with the energy, though not with the grace of a Garrick.

“Let the Muses shed tears, for Garrick has this day sold the patent of Drury Lane Theatre, and will never act after this winter. *Sic transit gloria mundi!* He retires with all his blushing honours thick about him, his laurels as green as in their early spring. Who shall supply his loss to the stage? Who shall now hold the master-key of the human heart? Who direct the passions with more than magic power? Who purify the stage; and who, in short, shall direct and nurse my dramatic muse?

“Yesterday was another of the few sunshiny days with which human life is so scantily furnished. We spent it at Garrick’s: he was in high good-humour, and inexpressibly agreeable. Here was likely to have been another jostling and intersecting of our pleasures; but as they knew Johnson would be with us at seven, Mrs. Garrick was so good as to dine a little after three, and all things fell out in comfortable succession. We were at the reading of a new tragedy, and insolently and unfeelingly pronounced against it. We got home in time: I hardly ever spent an evening more pleasantly or profitably. Johnson, full of wisdom and piety, was very communicative. To enjoy Dr. Johnson perfectly, one must have him to oneself, as he seldom cares to speak in mixed parties. Our tea was not

* A poetical tale of Hannah More’s.

over till nine ; we then fell upon Sir Eldred : he read both poems through ; suggested some little alterations in the first, and did me the honour to write one whole stanza ; but in the Rock he has not altered a word. Though only a tea visit, he staid with us till twelve. I was quite at my ease, and never once asked him to eat (drink he never does anything but tea) ; while you, I dare say, would have been fidgeted to death, and would have sent half over the town for chickens, and oysters, and asparagus, and Madeira. You see how frugal it is to be well-bred ; and not to think of such a vulgar renovation as eating and drinking."

During this visit to London Hannah More became the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Garrick at their town house. She thus announces this proposed visit.

"When I come back from Hampton I shall change my lodgings ; not that I have any particular objections to these, but those I have taken are much more airy, large, and elegant : besides the use, when I please, of the whole house, I shall have a bed-chamber and a dressing-room for my own particular company ; the master and mistress are themselves well-behaved sensible people and keep good company ; besides, they are fond of books, and can read, and have a shelf of books which they will lend me. The situation is pleasant and healthy—the centre house in the Adelphi. Add to this, it is not a common lodging-house, they are careful whom they take in, and will have no people of bad character, or who keep irregular hours ; so that on the whole, for the little time I remain in town, I think I shall be more comfortable in my new lodgings."

This expectation was not disappointed :

"It is not possible for anything on earth to be more agreeable to my taste than my present manner of living. I am so

much at my ease : have a great many hours at my own disposal : read my own books, and see my own friends : and, whenever I please, may join the most polished and delightful society in the world ! Our breakfasts are little literary societies. There is generally company at meals, as they think it saves time, by avoiding the necessity of seeing people at other seasons. Mr. Garrick sets the highest value upon his *time* of anybody I ever knew. From dinner to tea we laugh, chat, and talk nonsense : the rest of his time is generally devoted to study."

Garrick's acting was as highly appreciated by his guest as the virtues and charms of his private life :

" This evening I am engaged to spend with a foreigner. He is a Dane, unjustly deprived of his father's fortune by his mother's marrying a second time. I have never yet seen him, but I hear that all the world is to be there, which I think is a little unfeeling, as he is low-spirited at times, even to madness. For my part, from what I have heard, I do not think the poor young man will live out the night."

In her next letter, she says,

" I imagine my last was not so ambiguous but that you saw well enough I staid in town to see Hamlet ; and I will venture to say, that it was such an entertainment as will probably never again be exhibited to an admiring world. But this general panegyric can give you no idea of *my* feelings ; and particular praise would be injurious to his excellences.

" In every part he filled the whole soul of the spectator, and transcended the most finished idea of the poet. The requisites for Hamlet are not only various, but opposed. In him they are all united, and as it were concentrated. One thing I must particularly remark, that, whether in the simulation of madness, in the sinkings of despair, in the familiarity of friendship, in

the whirlwind of passion, or in the meltings of tenderness, he never once forgot he was a prince; and in every variety of situation, and transition of feeling, you discovered the highest polish of fine breeding and courtly manners.

“Hamlet experiences the conflict of many passions and affections, but filial love ever takes the lead; *that* is the great point from which he sets out, and to which he returns: the others are all contingent and subordinate to it, and are cherished or renounced, as they promote or obstruct the operation of this leading principle. Had you seen with what exquisite art and skill Garrick maintained the subserviency of the less to the greater interests, you would agree with me, of what importance to the perfection of acting, is that consummate good sense which always pervades every part of his performances.

“To the most eloquent expression of the eye, to the handwriting of the passions on his features, to a sensibility which tears to pieces the hearts of his auditors, to powers so unparalleled, he adds a judgment of the most exquisite accuracy, the fruit of long experience and close observation, by which he preserves every gradation and transition of the passions, keeping all under the control of a just dependence and natural consistency. So naturally, indeed, do the ideas of the poet seem to mix with his own, that he seemed himself to be engaged in a succession of affecting situations, not giving utterance to a speech, but to the instantaneous expression of his feelings, delivered in the most affecting tones of voice, and with gestures that belong only to nature. It was a fiction as delightful as fancy, and as touching as truth. A few nights before I saw him in ‘Abel Drugger;’ and had I not seen him in both, I should have thought it as possible for Milton to have written ‘Hudibras,’ and Butler ‘Paradise Lost,’ as for one man to have played ‘Hamlet’ and ‘Drugger’ with such excellence.”

Although Hannah More, at this period of her life, gave the fullest countenance to dramatic entertainments, she was very severe upon frequenters of the opera. An inconsistency which suggests the idea that she was not free from the common tendency to

“Compound for sins we are inclined to
By damning those we have no mind to.”

Of the opera she writes :

“‘Bear me, some God, O quickly bear me hence;
To wholesome solitude, the nurse of’ —

‘Sense,’ I was going to add in the words of Pope, till I recollected that *pence* had a more appropriate meaning, and was as good a rhyme. This apostrophe broke from me on coming from the opera, the first I ever *did*, the last I trust I ever *shall* go to. For what purpose has the Lord of the universe made his creature man with a comprehensive mind? Why make him a little lower than the angels? Why give him the faculty of thinking, the powers of wit and memory; and to crown all, an immortal and never dying spirit? Why all this wondrous waste, this prodigality of bounty, if the mere animal senses of sight and hearing (by which he is not distinguished from the brutes that perish) would have answered the end as well; and yet I find the same people are seen at the opera every night—an amusement written in a language the greater part of them do not understand, and performed by such a set of beings!

“But the man

‘Who bade the reign commence
Of rescued nature and reviving sense,’

sat at my elbow, and reconciled me to my situation, not by his approbation, but his presence. Going to the opera, like getting drunk, is a sin that carries its own punishment with it, and that a very severe one. Thank my dear Dr. S—— for his

kind and seasonable admonitions on my last Sunday's engagement at Mrs. Montagu's. Conscience had done its office before ; nay, was busy at the time : and if it did not dash the cup of pleasure to the ground, infused at least a tincture of wormwood into it. I *did* think of the alarming call, 'What dost thou here, Elijah ?' and I thought of it to-night at the opera."

Of all her London friends, the Garricks appear to have had the greatest share of Hannah More's affections. After Garrick's death she writes,

"I can never cease to remember with affection and gratitude, so warm, steady, and disinterested a friend ; and I can most truly bear this testimony to his memory, that I never witnessed, in any family, more decorum, propriety, and regularity than in his : where I never saw a card, or even met (except in one instance) a person of his own profession at his table : of which Mrs. Garrick, by her elegance of taste, her correctness of manners, and very original turn of humour, was the brightest ornament. All his pursuits and tastes were so decidedly intellectual, that it made the society and the conversation, which was always to be found in his circle, both interesting and delightful."

.. . . .

"HAMPTON, February, 1779.

"We have been at this sweet, and once cheerful place, near a week. Alas ! it has lost its perfume, yet it is in great beauty ; the weather is fine, the verdure charming ; 'and could we pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,' all would appear as beautiful as it used to do.

"A few very intimate friends came with us. Our first entrance was sad enough. Dagon looked as he used to do, and ran up to meet his master. Poor Mrs. Garrick went and shut herself up for half an hour. Not a sigh escapes our poor friend that she can restrain. When I expressed my sur-

prise at her self-command, she answered, 'Groans and complaints are very well for those who are to mourn but a little while; but a sorrow that is to last for life, will not be violent and romantic.' "

This sad loss appears, in a great measure, to have destroyed Hannah More's relish for pleasure-seeking. Having, for five consecutive years, spent three or four months of every year at this "laborious trade," as she terms it, its charms had passed away with its novelty. Even when most enjoying the amusements of the fashionable world, she had never been blind to its follies, and as she lost her taste for the former, the latter grew still more apparent to her. In 1775 she inveighs against the style of dress.

"Nothing can be conceived so absurd, extravagant, and fantastical as the present mode of dressing the head. Simplicity and modesty are things so much exploded, that the very names are no longer remembered. I have just escaped from one of the most fashionable disfigurers; and though I charged him to dress me with the greatest simplicity, and to have only a very distant eye upon the fashion, just enough to avoid the pride of singularity, without running into ridiculous excess; yet in spite of all these sage didactics, I absolutely blush at myself, and turn to the glass with as much caution as a vain beauty, just risen from the small-pox; which cannot be a more disfiguring disease than the present mode of dressing. Of the one, the calamity may be greater in its consequences, but of the other it is more corrupt in its cause."

The next year she writes:

"Again I am annoyed by the foolish absurdity of the present mode of dress. Some ladies carry on their heads a large quantity of fruit, and yet they would despise a poor useful member of society, who carried it there for the purpose of selling it for bread. Some, at the back of their perpendicular caps, hang four or five ostrich feathers, of different colours, &c.

Spirit of Addison ! thou pure and gentle shade, arise ! thou who, with such fine humour, and such polished sarcasm, didst lash the cherry-coloured hood, and the party patches ; and cut down with a trenchant sickle, a whole harvest of follies and absurdities ! awake ! for the follies thou didst lash were but the beginning of follies ; and the absurdities thou didst censure, were but the seeds of absurdities ! Oh, that thy master-spirit, speaking and chiding in thy graceful page, could recall the blushes, and collect the scattered and mutilated remnants of female modesty ! ”

Some years later her sarcasm is directed against large assemblies :

“ Conceive to yourself one hundred and fifty or two hundred people met together, dressed in the extremity of the fashion ; painted as red as bacchanals ; poisoning the air with perfumes ; treading on each other’s gowns ; making the crowd they blame ; nor one in ten able to get a chair ; protesting they are engaged to ten other places ; and lamenting the fatigue they are not obliged to endure. Ten or a dozen card-tables, crammed with dowagers of quality, grave ecclesiastics, and yellow admirals ; and you have an idea of an assembly. I never go to these things when I can possibly avoid it, and stay when there as few minutes as I can.”

In 1788 she writes,

“ Perhaps you do not know that a *Thé* is among the stupid new follies of the winter. You are to invite fifty or a hundred people to come at eight o’clock : there is to be a long table, or little parties at small ones ; the cloth is to be laid, as at breakfast ; every one has a napkin ;—tea and coffee are made by the company, as at a public breakfast ; the table is covered with rolls, wafers, bread-and-butter, and, what constitutes the very essence of a *Thé*, an immense load of hot buttered rolls, and

muffins ; all admirably contrived to create a nausea in persons fresh from the dinner-table. Now, of all the nations under the sun, as I take it, the English are the greatest fools :—because the duke of Dorset in Paris, where people dine at two, thought this would be a pretty fashion to introduce ; we who dine at six, must adopt this French translation of an English fashion, and fall into it, as if it were an original invention : taking up our own custom at third hand. This will be a short folly.”

Hannah More’s correspondence with Horace Walpole seems to carry this period of her life forward into the years when the dramatist had entirely given place to the moralist, and the woman of the world to the philanthropist. Two or three of these letters will serve to show the warmth of her regard for one with whom she had every year fewer interests in common.

“ COWSLIP GREEN, *June, 1787.*

“ DEAR SIR,—It is no encouragement to be good, when it is so profitable to do evil : and I shall grow wicked upon principle, and ungrateful by system. If I thought that not answering one letter would always procure me two such, I would be as silent as ingratitude, bad taste, and an unfeeling heart, can cause the most undeserving to be. I did, indeed, receive your first obliging letter, and intended, in the true spirit of a Bristol trader, to have sent you some of my worthless beads and bits of glass, in exchange for your ivory and gold dust ; but a very tedious, nervous headache has made me less than ever qualified to traffic with you in this dishonest way, and I have been so little accustomed to connect your idea with that of pain and uneasiness, that I know not how to set about the strange association ; but I am now better, and would not have named being sick at all, if there were any other apology in the world that would have justified my not writing. Mrs. Carter and I have a thousand times agreed that your wit was by no means the cause of our esteem for you ; because you cannot *help* having it if you

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would ; and I never in my life could be attached to any one for their wit, if wit was the best thing they had. It is an established maxim with me, that the truest objects of warm attachment are the small parts of great characters. I never considered the patriotic Brutus with any delight as the asserter of freedom, and as 'refulgent from the stroke of Cæsar's fate;' no, it is the gentle, compassionate Brutus that engages my affection, who refused to disturb the slumbers of the poor boy who attended him in that anxious night when he destroyed himself, and so much needed his services. So when I sit in a little hermitage I have built in my garden, *not to be melancholy in*, but to think upon my friends, and to read their works and their letters, Mr. Walpole seldomer presents himself to my mind as the man of wit, than as the tender-hearted and humane friend of my dear infirm, broken-spirited Mrs. Vesey. We admire talents, and admiration is a cold sentiment, with which affection has commonly nothing to do, but we more than admire them when they are devoted to such gentle purposes. . . .

"I am become a perfect outlaw from all civil society and regular life. I spend almost my whole time in my little garden, 'which mocks my scant manuring.' From 'morn to noon, from noon to dewy eve,' I am employed in raising dejected pinks, and reforming disorderly honeysuckles.

"Yours, dear Sir, very faithfully,

"H. M."

"SANDLEFORD HOUSE, *Sept.* 1789.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have been so brutally negligent of your last favour, that you might once have taunted me with the proverbial reproach, that 'ingratitude is worse than the sin of witchcraft;' but now that demonology, and miracles, and witchcraft are become fashionable and approved things, you must endeavour to find out a new similitude wherewith to

compare my wickedness. But though I cannot bring myself to allow of the pert axiom, that virtue is its own reward, I am willing enough, in this instance at least, to allow that sin is its own punishment; for every post I delay answering a letter of yours, so many days do I voluntarily put off entitling myself to a very great entertainment; I mean that of getting another letter from you; so I am at least more disinterested than most criminals. But really, if I were only half as good as you sometimes abuse me for pretending to be, instead of being entirely pleased with hearing from you, I should mix a little wholesome fear with my gratification, for you not only do all you can to turn my head by printing my trumpery verses *yourself*, but you call in royal aid to complete my delirium, by sending me a bewildering piece of flattery from a most amiable princess. You cannot imagine what a bad effect on my morals a little praise has from you great people; I swallow it with the most simple and unresisting eagerness in the world, upon Hamlet's plain principle,

‘For what advancement can they hope from me!’

“I comfort myself that you will counteract some part of the injury you have done my principles this summer, by a regular course of abuse when we meet in the winter: remember that you owe this restorative to my moral health; next to being flattered, I like to be scolded; but to be let quietly alone, would be intolerable. Dr. Johnson said once to me, ‘Never mind whether they praise or abuse your writings; anything is tolerable except oblivion.’

“I have been an arrant stroller;—amusing myself by sailing down the beautiful river Wye, looking at abbeys and castles, with Mr. Gilpin in my hand to teach me to criticize, and talk of foregrounds, and distances, and perspectives, and prominences, with all the cant of connoisseurship: and then to

gination, which had been not a little disordered
anting scenery, I have been living in sober mag-
the Plantagenet Dowager Duchess at Stoke,
discretion, and a little less fancy, was proper and
l then I have had Mrs. Montagu at my cottage,
have had Mrs. Garrick, and then I have had
ce ; so that, with all my fantastic dreams of
retreat, and *a place to retire to be melancholy in*,
like a hermit, or more like a dissipated fine lady,
ily conceive. And now I am at Mrs. Montagu's,
where are Gothic windows, and Grecian art, and
nd which (if Mr. Wyatt ever has the kindness to
h I doubt) will at last be really a fine place,
characterized by fine parts than a good whole :
s. Montagu's best possessions I reckon her niece,
sensible, discreet, and accomplished, and not (at
poiled by the world, though a great fortune.
ce ! though I am sorry that the lawless rabble
ant, yet I cannot help hoping that some good
the sum of human misery having been so con-
ned at one blow by the destruction of the Bastile.
nction of the Inquisition (unless the fire is only
the ashes, and not wholly quenched), and the
Africa, I hope yet to see accomplished ; and
have seen these three great engines of the devil
lished, exterminated, my greatest wishes on this
ll be gratified ; and even then there will be fully
al and moral evil left in the world as one's heart
out these stupendous and elaborate inventions
the misery of mankind by mountains of sin and
umity. If I knew one human being who more
yourself joins with me in wishing to see the
happier than it is, I would have uttered my com-

plaints to him, and not to you, though I believe it would have been more to the credit of my philosophy not to have uttered them at all. Unluckily, however, I have not in me one atom of that stuff out of which philosophers are made. I want to know if you have biographized the new noble author, who, I, think, will figure in your hands, after having renounced the turf for the Fathers. I hear he has just written a catechism.

“It is really abusing the permission given me to be impertinent, to run on thus without wit or shame. The last of these qualities, however, does begin to operate, and I will say no more, but that I cannot say how much I am, my dear Sir,

“Your ever obliged,

“H. M.”

“COWSLIP GREEN, *Sept. 14, 1793.*

“MY DEAR LORD,—To any one who is truly acquainted with the sincerity of my regard for your Lordship, it would appear incredible that I could suffer myself to pass the whole summer without any outward sign of that sentiment. But really, independently of much indolence, much occupation, and no small share of sickness on my part, I believe I grow modest and humble as I grow old, and hardly feel myself entitled to break in upon your pleasant employments or your quiet leisure. It is one of my interesting pleasures to receive a letter from your Lordship, while I am cut off, as I have been almost completely for the last three years, from the more lively satisfaction of your society, which I have ever had taste enough to rank in its proper place. I need not say how high that place is.

“I wish you joy of the true, genuine summer we have had. The Bishop of London writes me word that only he and your Lordship were worthy of it, for that you were the only persons who did not huff the warm weather away. As I value your health, even more than your pleasure, it will be a real comfort

to me to know that it has contributed to the former at least as much as, I am assured, it has to the latter.

“My little garden is now so sweetly green, that your French friends would abuse its *tristesse*. I was sorry I could not see *little* Strawberry in its beautified state. We had a sort of scheme to take a peep at it when I was at Fulham; but as we could not, at the same time, have taken a peep at you, and as we think that there are certain living creatures which warm the heart, and please the eyes beyond all rural scenery, we did not go.

“My heart and my imagination are saddened by the devastation of my species, with which every newspaper is full. There are some terms, which, though commonly coupled together, appear to me so incongruous, that I hardly admit of their union, such as pious frauds, short war, bad peace, &c. These mad monkeys of the Convention do contrive to enliven my unappeasable indignation against them with occasional provocatives to mirth. How do you like the egregious inventions of the anniversary follies of the 10th of August? Before I have dried my eyes after weeping at the picture of the queen carrying her little bundle into her narrow and squalid prison, I am compelled to ‘*exhibit a ghastly smile*’ at the idea of a warm bath solemnly marching in procession. I was going on, but I am too much in a rage,

“I have had the honour of being presented with three very severe answers to my pamphlet against Dupont;* the first accused me of opposing God’s vengeance against popery, by my wickedly wishing that the French priests should not be starved, when it was God’s will that they should; the second

* ‘Remarks on the Speech of Mr. Dupont, made in the National Convention, on the subjects of Religion and Public Education. Published for the relief of the Emigrant Priests.’

undertakes the defence of Dupont, and justifies his principles ; the third declares that I am a favourer of the old popish massacres. I can truly assure your Lordship, that all three have not given me one minute's uneasiness. I was only sorry that so much reproof could not possibly do me any good. Had my adversaries accused me of almost anything but a fondness for bloodshed and popery, I think my conscience might, in some degree, have pleaded guilty, and I might have set about a serious reformation, the proper end of all repentance. However, all censure is profitable, for if one does not happen to deserve it for the thing in question, it makes one look into oneself ; but my mind is of such a sort of make, that my chief danger lies not in abuse, but in flattery ; it is the slaver that kills, and not the bite. Yet let me not try to pass for better than I am ; these hostilities do not happen to be *my* trials ; it costs me but small effort to forgive these angry men. My feelings are excited by other objects than pamphlets, paragraphs, reviews, or magazines, written against me by people I do not know, and whose opinion makes no part of my happiness. But an unkind look, a severe word, or a cool letter from one of those very few persons who make up my world, would very painfully convince me that it is not a deadness or insensibility to the opinion of others that keeps me so quiet under certain provocations ; that my patience is only partial, and that if the right, or rather the wrong string be touched, I have as much discord in me as any other. Can your Lordship forgive all this egotism ? I have been betrayed into it by my subject, and I am afraid it is so pleasant to talk of oneself, that one had almost rather talk of one's faults, than not talk of oneself at all."

As Hannah More's taste for the pleasures of the town decreased, her enjoyment of the pleasures of the country grew more intense. In a letter written in 1784, she very beautifully describes the different effects on the mind of grand and merely pretty scenery.

“I have lived a most gloriously idle life, all the last months, rambling about the romantic hills and delicious valleys of Somersetshire: it is full of enchanting scenery. The views are rather interesting than magnificent; and the neighbourhood of the friend's house where I was, abounds with the most smiling valleys, the most touching little home views, the prettiest rising and falling grounds, the clearest living streams, and the most lovely hanging woods I ever saw. These gentle scenes, which are *agrestes* without being savage, are, I am persuaded, more delightful to *live* amongst than the blaze and the roar, the awful and astonishing, of the sublime: of this I am convinced, by a ride we took through the lofty cliffs of Cheddar, so stupendously romantic that the shade of Ossian or the ghost of Taliessen himself might range, not undelighted, through them; my imagination was delighted, was confounded, was oppressed, and darted a thousand years back into the days of chivalry and enchantment, at seeing hang over my head, vast ledges of rock exactly resembling mouldered castles and ruined abbeys. I had a delightful confusion of broken images in my head, without one distinct idea; but the delight was of so serious a nature that I could scarcely refrain from crying, especially when we sat down upon a fragment of rock, and heard one of Gray's odes finely set, and sung with infinite feeling. I would have given the world to have heard my favourite Ode to Melancholy by Beaumont and Fletcher; you know it:—

‘An eye that's fastened to the ground,
A tongue chained up without a sound;
Gloomy cells, and twilight groves,
Places which pale Passion loves,’ &c., &c.

But these pensive pleasures should be repeated at long intervals; they wind up the mind too high, and infuse into

the spirit a sentiment compounded of sadness and delight, which, though it may qualify one to write odes, yet indisposes one for a much more indispensable thing, the enjoyment of the intercourse of ordinary society."

Two years later Hannah More fixed her abode at Cowslip Green, in a cottage which she had built for herself, not far from Bristol. Of this retirement she writes,

"It is a pleasant wild place, and I am growing a prodigious gardener, and make up by my industry for my want of science. I work in it two or three hours every day ; and by the time the hour of visiting arrives, for even I have my visitors in this little corner, I am vastly glad of a pretence for sitting down. I am rather proud of my pinks and roses : the latter would not have been ashamed to hold up their heads before the queen of Rose-dale : but a long succession of uninterrupted dry weather has a little shrivelled up these beauties, and made them wither before the short term of their natural life was near an end."

3.—LITERARY LABOURS.

Whether in the whirl of London life, or in the comparative seclusion of the country, Hannah More was never idle. Her literary labours extended over a period of more than fifty years, and neither repeated illnesses, nor old age—up to the last two or three years of her life,—ever relaxed her mental activity. The following extract illustrates her wonderful energy. It refers to a severe and dangerous illness which attacked her when in her 76th year :

"In the midst of my illness, Cadell wrote to entreat me to preface a new edition of 'Moral Sketches' with a short tribute to our late lamented king. My friend wrote him word it was utterly impossible, that I might as well attempt to fly as to write. A week after, supposing me to be better, he again renewed his entreaty. I was not better, but worse. I fancied,

however, that what was difficult, might not be impossible. So, having got everybody out of the way, I furnished myself with pen, ink, and paper, which I concealed in my bed, and next morning in a high fever, with my pulse above a hundred, without having formed one idea, bolstered up, I began to scribble. I got on for about seven pages, my hand being almost as incompetent as my head. I hid my scrawl, and said not a word, while my doctor and my friends wondered at my increased debility. After a strong opiate, I next morning returned to my task, and finished seven pages more, and delivered my almost illegible papers to my friend to transcribe and send away. I got well scolded, but I loved the king, and was carried through by a sort of affectionate impulse ; so it stands as a preface to the seventh edition. You will be as much surprised as myself that this slight work should have made its way so rapidly in these distracted times, which, the booksellers tell me, have been the most unfavourable to literature that they have ever known. The preface is just such a meagre performance as you would expect from the writer, and from the strange circumstances of the writing."

We proceed to give a few extracts from Hannah More's own accounts of her various works. Of her tragedy of 'Percy,' which was brought out at Covent Garden theatre during the height of her friendship with Garrick, she writes,

"GERRARD STREET, 1777.

"It is impossible to tell you of all the kindness and friendship of the Garricks ; he thinks of nothing, talks of nothing, writes of nothing but Percy. He is too sanguine ; it will have a fall, and so I tell him. When Garrick had finished his prologue and epilogue (which are excellent), he desired I would pay him. Dryden, he said, used to have five guineas a piece, but as he was a richer man he would be content if I would

treat him with a handsome supper and a bottle of claret. We haggled sadly about the price, I insisting that I could only afford to give him a beef steak and a pot of porter ; and at about twelve we sat down to some toast and honey, with which the temperate bard contented himself. Several very great ones made interest to hear Garrick read the play, which he peremptorily refused. I supped on Wednesday night at Sir Joshua's : spent yesterday morning at the Chancellor's, and the evening at Mrs. Boscawen's, lady Bathurst being of the party.

"What dreadful news from America ! we are a disgraced, undone nation. What a sad time to bring out a play in ! when, if the country had the least spark of virtue remaining, not a creature would think of going to it. But the levity of the times will, on this occasion, be of some service to me.

" Mr. Garrick's study, Adelphi, ten at night.

"He himself puts the pen into my hand, and bids me say that all is just as it should be. Nothing was ever more warmly received. I went with Mr. and Mrs. Garrick ; sat in Mr. Harris's box, in a snug dark corner, and behaved very well, that is very quietly. The prologue and epilogue were received with bursts of applause ; so, indeed, was the whole ; as much beyond my expectations as my deserts. Mr. Garrick's kindness has been unceasing."

Again, after the second performance,

"I may now venture to tell you (as you extorted a promise from me to conceal nothing), what I would not hazard last night,—that the reception of Percy exceeds my most sanguine wishes. I am just returned from the second night, and it was, if possible, received more favourably than on the first. One tear is worth a thousand hands, and I had the satisfaction to see even the men shed them in abundance.

“The critics (as is usual), met at the Bedford last night, to fix the character of the play. If I were a heroine of romance, and was writing to my confidante, I should tell you all the fine things that were said, but as I am a real living Christian woman, I do not think it would be so modest; I will only say as Garrick does, that I have had so much flattery, that I might, if I would, choke myself in my own pap.”

Her next dramatic effort, ‘Fatal Falsehood,’ was brought out after Garrick’s death. This play, though not so successful as the former one, was very well received. Nine years later, Hannah More came before the public in another character, in which she was no less warmly welcomed. In 1788 she writes to her sister :

“For this last week I have been writing all day, and half the night, either in prose or in verse. My book is now before the public, with its sounding title, ‘Thoughts on the Importance of the Manners of the Great to General Society.’ I really was fearful lest many of those with whom I live a good deal, might think that my own views and theirs were too much alike. Occasions, indeed, continually occur in which I speak honestly and pointedly: but all one can do in a promiscuous society is not so much to start religious topics, as to extract from common subjects some useful and awful truth, and to counteract the mischief of a popular sentiment by one drawn from religion; and if I do any little good, it is in this way; and this they will in a degree endure. Fine people are ready enough to join you in reprobating vice; for they are not *all* vicious; but their standard of right is low; it is not the standard of the Gospel. In this little book I have not gone deep; it is but a superficial view of the subject; it is confined to prevailing practical evils. Should this succeed, I hope, by the blessing of God, another time to attack more strongly the *principle*. I have not owned myself the author; not so much because of that fear of man

which 'worketh a snare,' as because, if anonymous, it may be ascribed to some better person : and because I fear I do not live as I write. I hope it may be useful to myself, at least, as I give a sort of public pledge of my principles, to which I pray I may be enabled to act up.

"I am now busily engaged on a poem, to be called 'Slavery.' I grieve I did not set about it sooner ; as it must now be done in such a hurry as no poem should ever be written in, to be properly correct ; but good or bad, if it does not come out at the particular moment when the discussion comes on in parliament, it will not be worth a straw. This I shall bring out in an open, honourable manner, with my name staring in the front ; but the other is to be a clandestine birth ; so be sure not a word on the subject."

Of the success of these two publications she writes,

"The *secret* book seems to make its way very much in the great world ; but the demon of suspicion is awakened, I am afraid not to be lulled to sleep ; however, we own nothing. At first, it was currently said to be Mr. Wilberforce's : Lord Elgin came to the Bishop of London, and assured them of this as a certain fact ; but, unfortunately, going from the Bishop to call on Mr. W. he found him reading it, and extolling it, which put an end to *that* conjecture. Then it was as confidently reported to be the Bishop himself, till somebody recollected that the author had said he was not a clergyman. I received an anonymous epigram the other day, but I think I know the hand. Here it is—

'Of sense and religion in this little book
All agree there's a wonderful store ;
But while round the world for an *author* they look,
I only am wishing for *More*.'

I am a little frightened ; but nobody has betrayed me ; it is only by the internal evidence that it is guessed at. When the author is discovered, I shall expect to find almost every door shut against me :—*mais n'importe*, I shall only be sent to my darling retirement. I spent Saturday evening at Lady Amherst's ; the *book* lay on the table—several of the company took it up, talked it over, and Mr. Pepys looked me through ; so that I never had such difficulty to keep my countenance. A day or two before, I dined at the Bishop of Salisbury's ; I was obliged to sit to hear him, Mrs. Montagu, and the Bishop of Lincoln talk it over with the greatest warmth ; all commended it, though some of the company thought it rather too strict, but the bishops justified it.

“As to ‘*Slavery*,’ I know not what degree of success it has in the world at large ; among the critics it is in pretty good odour ; my two favourite bishops commend it, and I have had very polite and flattering letters from the Bishops of Llandaff, Peterborough, &c. ; and very pleasant ones from the Dean of Canterbury and Dean Tucker. . . .

“Yesterday I visited Mr. Walpole ; he said not a word or the little sly book, but took me to task in general terms for having exhibited such monstrously severe doctrines. I knew he alluded to the ‘Manners of the Great,’ but we pretended not to understand one another, and it was a most ridiculous conversation. He defended (and that was the joke) religion against me, and said he would do so against the whole bench of bishops ; that the Fourth Commandment was the most amiable and merciful law that ever was promulgated, as it entirely considers the ease and comfort of the hard-labouring poor, and beasts of burden ; but that it never was intended for persons of fashion, who have no occasion to rest, as they never do anything on the other days ; and, indeed, at the time the law was made, there were no people of fashion. He really

pretended to be in earnest, and we parted mutually unconverted; he lamenting that I am fallen into the heresy of *puritanical* strictness, and I lamenting that he is a person of fashion, for whom the Ten Commandments were not made."

In a few more years Hannah More's pen was enlisted in the service of politics:

"As soon as I came to Bath, our dear Bishop of London came to me with a dismal countenance, and told me that I should repent it on my death-bed, if I, who knew so much of the habit and sentiment of the lower order of people, did not write some little thing tending to open their eyes under their present wild impressions of liberty and equality. It must be something level to their apprehensions, or it would be of no use. In an evil hour, against my will and my judgment, on one sick day, I scribbled a little pamphlet, called '*Village Politics, by Will Chip*;' and the very next morning after I had first conceived the idea I sent it off to Rivington, changing my bookseller, in order the more surely to escape detection. It is as vulgar as heart can wish; but it is only designed for the most vulgar class of readers. I heartily hope I shall not be discovered, as it is a sort of writing repugnant to my nature; though, indeed, it is rather a case of *peace* than of *politics*. I did not send one to you, my dear madam, nor to any friend, as that generally furnishes a clue to discovery, which it was my object to avoid. Rivington sends me word that 'they go off very greatly, and the purchasers are people of rank.'"

Having thus done something for the improvement of the lower classes, Hannah More next devoted herself to a work addressed to the very highest class in the land.

"BATTERSEA RISE, 1805.

"MY DEAR LADY WALDEGRAVE,—As to *the secret* which I was desirous to communicate to you as a mark of my con-

fidence and friendship, it is this ;—I had been for many months busily employed (at the earnest desire of some friends) in preparing a work which might assist in forming the principles of *her* who in all probability will be our future queen. I should have desired your acceptance of a copy as soon as it was published, which was more than a fortnight ago, but I wished you to be able to say, if questioned by the Duchess, or any other person, that you had not received it *from the author*. As I do not, however, feel satisfied at keeping you in the dark any longer, I write this little history. In spite of all my secrecy, I was soon found out, not from its having been betrayed, but from the style, and other internal evidence. I did not, however, avow it, and I even corresponded with the Bishop of Exeter, who seemed highly to approve the work, without putting my name, and he addresses me by the appellation of *Sir*. I have not yet sent a copy to Princess Sophia, but think to do it soon. It is a disadvantage at first to any work to appear without a name, as it causes it to be slowly known. In speaking of it, however, you may say with truth, that, though written for royalty, it was meant to be useful also to all young persons of rank and liberal education.”

Having made her mark as a dramatist and a moralist, Hannah More next tried her powers as a novelist. Of this new venture, which appeared anonymously under the title of ‘*Cœlebs in Search of a Wife*,’ she writes in 1809 to her friend, Sir W. Pepys:

“I was very angry with you and the rest of the world for detecting the author of ‘*Cœlebs*’ through a disguise which I thought impenetrable. I wrote it to amuse the languor of disease. I thought there were already good books enough in the world for good people ; but that there was a large class of readers whose wants had not been attended to,—the subscribers to the circulating library. A little to raise the tone

of that mart of mischief, and to counteract its corruptions, I thought was an object worth attempting. Commendation and abuse have, I think, been *pretty liberally* dealt out to me. My early foe —— has kept alive all that rancour which he exerted against me thirty years ago, because ‘Percy,’ with perhaps less merit, had more success than the ‘Battle of Hastings.’ Though I am not blind to the faults of my own book, and have always received just criticism thankfully, and adopted it uniformly, yet when ‘Coelebs’ is accused of a design to *overturn the Church*, I cannot but smile; and I own I felt the sale of ten large impressions in the first six months (twelve are now gone) as a full consolation for the barbed arrows of Mr. S— and Mr. C—.”

Of another of her principal works she writes in 1814,

“My book will be called, and justly, a presumptuous undertaking. It is an *Essay on the Character and Practical Writings of Saint Paul*. I am sure beforehand of two classes of enemies, the very high Calvinists, and what is called the very high Church party, two formidable bodies; but as I have written, I trust, from my conscience, I shall patiently submit to their different awards. I own the subject is above my strength at best, and now that little strength is of course less. It will be my last attempt. Perhaps you will say a few of its predecessors might have been spared.”

The following passage from a letter to Walpole shows how little party spirit there was in Hannah More’s own religious views:

“I heartily thank you, dear Sir, for your friendly cautions about what you call the Constantinopolitan jargons, but, believe me, I am in no danger; you yourself have hardly a higher disdain of the narrow spirit, the contracting littleness, of party

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in religion. I deplore the separating system and the sad bigotry which has split the Christian world, and made the different sects, like the teeth of Cadmus, destroy one another as fast as they spring up. But, indeed, this is not the spirit of Christianity, which is all love and peace."

In 1817 Hannah More was again called upon to exert her influence against the revolutionary spirit of the time:

"And now shall I confess how low I have been sinking in the ranks of literature? I did not think to turn ballad-monger in my old age. But the strong and urgent representations I have had from the highest quarters of the very alarming temper of the times, and the spirit of revolution which shows itself more or less in all manufacturing towns, has led me to undertake, as a duty, a task I should gladly have avoided. I have written many songs, papers, &c., by way of antidote to this fatal poison. Thousands and tens of thousands have been circulated without its being known from what source they proceeded. As to some of them, my quiet, perhaps my safety, requires silence, where obnoxious names are mentioned. These I propose, some of them at least, to have expunged in a future edition. I send you a few specimens. 'The Village Disputants' has been long known to be mine. I have accommodated this tract to the present times. Hatchard prints them."

Hannah More's last literary effort of any importance was directed against another manifestation of the spirit of the age, which she regarded with extreme disapprobation. In 1819 she writes to Sir W. Pepys:

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I have been long wishing, as in duty bound, to transmit to you the thanks, both my own and those of the naked, the hungry, and the ignorant, whom you have been the instrument of clothing, feeding, and instructing, this

year ! May God increase his mercies to you for the mercy you have shown to others ! You may justly say, ‘if you wished to write to me, why then did you *not* write?’ The newspapers will probably have told you why, and I am sorry that you should learn from them, before you heard from me, that I have been guilty of the weakness, at my age, of doing that imprudent and presumptuous thing, writing a book. I had fully resolved, as became me, to commit no more indiscretions of this sort ; but I have broken, as did *not* become me, my resolution. Though living in retirement, falsely so-called, I see so many people from every point of the compass, that I find there is a fresh crop of errors sprung up in a quarter where we did not so much look for them, namely among the religious, or rather the *professing* part of the world. Mine is a book which, in addition to its being feebly written, will bring me no small discredit, as well with the grave as the gay. For one part of it, I expect to have the whole fashionable world, at least all that part of it who look into a grave book, falling upon me without mercy. But I can’t help it ; I have really seen and heard so much of the evils arising, and likely to arise, from the epidemic French mania, that ‘while I was musing, the fire burned, and at the last I spake with my’ pen. You will, I fear, think I have been too strong, but when I see our country almost abandoned in this second assault upon its safety, and millions spent abroad, while our poor have been perishing at home, I could not restrain my feelings. The rage for a Paris excursion has spread such a general infection, that curates, and even farmers in our part of the world, have caught the malady. A clergyman with ten children has been twice, and his wife is now left there, with a house full of daughters, that they may bring home the Parisian accent to a little country village ! I hope this impudent book will have the honour to wait upon you in about a fortnight.”

4.—PHILANTHROPIC LABOURS.

In the midst of all her sedentary tasks, Hannah More found leisure for active labours which would have occupied the whole time of a less energetic person. The commencement of these labours is thus described in a letter to a friend :

“ My *whole* time, however, has not been devoted to such idle pursuits as travelling and visiting. I am engaged in a work in which I am sure I shall have your hearty prayers and good wishes. You will I dare say mistake the word *work*, and think it is some literary vanity ; but no, *le voici*. A friend of mine and myself having with great concern discovered a very large village, at many miles’ distance from me, containing incredible multitudes of poor, plunged in an excess of vice, poverty, and ignorance beyond what one would suppose possible in a civilized and Christian country, have undertaken the task of seeing if we cannot become humble instruments of usefulness to these poor creatures, in the way of schools, and a little sort of manufactory. The difficulties are great, and my hopes not sanguine ; but *He* who does not ‘despise the day of small things,’ will, I trust, bless this project. I am going directly down to my little colony, to see what can be done before winter sets in. My long absence at that period will be a grievous circumstance.”

To Mr. Wilberforce she writes, from the scene of her undertaking,

“ GEORGE HOTEL, CHEDDAR, 1789.

“ DEAR SIR,—Though this is but a *romantic place*, as my friend Matthew well observed, yet you would laugh to see the bustle I am in. I was told we should meet with great opposition if we did not try to propitiate the chief despot of the village, who is very rich, and very brutal ; so I ventured to

the den of this monster, in a country as savage as himself, near Bridgewater. He begged I would not think of bringing any religion into the country ; it was the worst thing in the world for the poor, for it made them lazy and useless. In vain did I represent to him that they would be more industrious as they were better principled ; and that, for my own part, I had no selfish views in what I was doing. He gave me to understand that he knew the world too well to believe either the one or the other. Somewhat dismayed to find that my success bore no proportion to my submissions, I was almost discouraged from more visits ; but I found that friends must be secured at all events, for if these rich savages set their faces against us, and influenced the poor people, I saw that nothing but hostilities would ensue ; so I made eleven more of these agreeable visits ; and as I improved in the art of canvassing, had better success. Miss Wilberforce would have been shocked, had she seen the petty tyrants whose insolence I stroked and tamed, the ugly children I fondled, the pointers and spaniels I caressed, the cider I commended, and the wine I swallowed. After these irresistible flatteries, I inquired of each if he would recommend to me a house ; and said that I had a little plan which I hoped would secure their orchards from being robbed, their rabbits from being shot, their game from being stolen, and which might lower the poor-rates. If effect be the best proof of eloquence, then mine was a good speech, for I gained at length the hearty concurrence of the whole people, and their promise to discourage or favour the poor in proportion as they were attentive or negligent in sending their children."

After five years' experience Hannah More writes to the Rev. John Newton :

" You will be glad to hear that our work rather increases. I think our various schools and societies consist of about sixteen

or seventeen hundred. This would be comparatively little fatigue, if they lay near together, but our ten parishes lie at considerable distances, so that poor Patty and I have a diameter of about twenty miles to travel in order to get at them. In some of these parishes we dare not do all we wish, by reason of the worldly clergymen, who are now quiet and civil, but who would become hostile if we attempted in *their* parishes what we do in some others. In some of the most profligate places we have had the most success; and where we chiefly fail, it is with your *pretty good kind of people*, who do not see how they can be better. I think it has pleased God to give us the most rapid progress in the parish we last took up, not above a year ago. This place has helped to people the county gaol and Botany Bay beyond any I know of. They seemed to have reached a sort of crisis of iniquity. Of nearly two hundred children, many of them grown up, hardly any had ever seen the inside of a church since they were christened. I cannot tell you the avidity with which the Scriptures were received by numbers of these poor creatures. Finding the heads of the parish (farmers) quite as ignorant as their labourers, we devised a method, at the outset, of saving their pride, by setting apart one evening in the week on purpose for their instruction. About twenty of them, including their wives, attend, and many seem to be brought under serious impressions."

In two more years the work is still farther extended:

"We have in hand a new and very laborious undertaking, laborious on account of its great distance from home. But the object appeared to me so important that I did not feel myself at liberty to neglect it. It is a parish, the largest in our county or diocese, in a state of great depravity and ignorance. The opposition I have met with in endeavouring to establish an institution for the religious instruction of these people would

excite your astonishment. The principal adversary is a farmer of 1000*l.* a year, who says the lower classes are *fated* to be wicked and ignorant, and, as wise as I am, I cannot alter what is *decreed*. He has laboured to ruin the poor curate for favouring our cause, and says he shall not have a workman to obey him, for I shall make them all as wise as himself. In spite of this hostility, however, which far exceeds anything I have met with, I am building a house, and taking up things on such a large scale, that you must not be surprised if I get into gaol for debt (even should I escape it for my irregular proceedings, which is the most to be feared); as, notwithstanding the kind and generous legacy of my dear and lamented Mrs. Bouverie, my schemes will suffer greatly by her death, as her purse was my sure resort in all difficulties. Providence, I trust, will carry me through the business of this new undertaking, for in spite of the active malevolence we experience, I have brought already between three and four hundred under a course of instruction: the worst part of the story is, that thirty miles there and back, is a little too much these short days; and when we get there, our house has as yet neither windows nor doors; but if we live till next summer, things will mend, and in so precarious a world as this, a winter was not to be lost! It rather brings about some of our worldly clergy in two or three parishes, when they see that we labour strenuously to attach our people to the State as well as to the Church."

Before long Hannah More had to encounter some more formidable adversaries than ignorant farmers. In a letter to Sir W. Pepys, dated 1808, she gives a short account of the persecutions which commenced in 1799.

"You have doubtless heard that I have had far greater trials than any which sickness could inflict. I will only say, in a

few words, that two Jacobin and infidel curates, poor and ambitious, formed the design of attracting notice, and getting preferment, by attacking some charity schools (which, with no small labour, I have carried on in this county for near twenty years), as seminaries of vice, sedition, and disaffection. At this distance of time, for it has now ended in their disgrace and shame, it will make you smile when I tell you a few of the charges brought against me, viz., that I hired two men to assassinate one of these clergymen ;—that I was actually taken up for seditious practices ;—that I was with Hadfield in his attack on the king's life : one of them strongly insinuated this from the pulpit, and then caused the newspaper, which related the attack, to be read at the church-door. At the same time, mark the consistency ! they declared that I was in the pay of Mr. Pitt, and the grand instigator (poor I) of the war, by mischievous pamphlets ; and to crown the whole, that I was concerned with Charlotte Corday in the murder of Marat !!! That wicked and needy men should invent this, is not so strange as that they should have found magazines, reviews, and pamphleteers to support them. My declared resolution never to defend myself, certainly encouraged them to go on. Yet how thankful am I that I kept that resolution ; though the grief and astonishment excited by this combination nearly cost me my life. I can now look back, not only without emotion, to this attack, but it has been even matter of *thankfulness* to me ; it helped to break my too strong attachment to the world, it showed me the vanity of human applause, and has led me, I hope, to be *more* anxious about the motives of my actions, and *less* anxious about their consequences."

Courted and flattered by all ranks, successful in all that she attempted, rejoicing with pardonable self-gratulation in her wide-spread popularity, and unavoidably conscious of powers far above the average, it would not have been surprising had Hannah More overstepped the

bounds placed by her sex around the field of her labours. But the strong common-sense which directed her judgment, allied with the practical Christianity which was the rule of her life, kept her free from all the follies that so often cling like parasites to exceptional talents. Hannah More concerned herself with the *Duties*, never with the *Rights of Women*, and she strongly opposed all movements which had a tendency to bring female names into publicity. In 1793 she wrote to the Earl of Orford :

“I have been much pestered to read the ‘Rights of Women,’ but am invincibly resolved not to do it. Of all jargon, I hate metaphysical jargon : besides, there is something fantastic and absurd in the very title. How many ways there are of being ridiculous ! I am sure I have as much liberty as I can make a good use of, now I am an old maid ; and when I was a young one, I had, I daresay, more than was good for me. If I were still young, perhaps I should not make this confession ; but so many women are fond of government, I suppose, because they are not fit for it. To be unstable and capricious, I really think, is but too characteristic of our sex ; and there is perhaps no animal so much indebted to subordination for its good behaviour, as woman. I have soberly and uniformly maintained this doctrine, ever since I have been capable of observation, and I used horribly to provoke some of my female friends, *maitresses femmes*, by it, especially such heroic spirits as poor Mrs. Walsingham. I believe they used to suspect me of art in it, as if I wanted to court the approbation of the other sex, who, it must be confessed, politically encourage this submissive temper in us ; but I really maintained the opinion in sincerity and simplicity, both from what I felt at home and have seen abroad.”

Twenty-seven years later the same strict sense of womanly modesty is shown in a letter to Sir W. Pepys :

“You have heard of the ‘Royal Society of Literature.’

Another of my old and dear friends, the Bishop of St. David's (himself, I believe, one of the first scholars on the bench) has been corresponding with me on the subject. The king is patron, and his patronage will be large. It is not yet quite organized, nor much known. The first dissertation is to be on 'The Age, Writings, and Genius of Homer;' a principal object being to promote ancient learning. Now as learning is the next best thing to religion, I hope the scheme may succeed. I have but one objection to it. Among the honorary members, they propose to include a few females. They have done unworthy me the honour to name me; I have written a strong remonstrance, declining the distinction, partly on the ground that I have no claim to it, but chiefly that I consider the circumstance of sex alone a disqualification."

CHAPTER XI.
THE PERCY CORRESPONDENCE.

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IN the middle of the last century, there was, playing about the Churchyard of Islington, a boy of about seven years old, who, when approaching his sixtieth year, having retired to his native village, expressed a wish that he might be permitted "to pass the evening of a laborious life in the calm enjoyment of domestic tranquillity; and that his earthly remains might be deposited with those of several near relations, whose loss he has long deplored, in the churchyard where many of his happiest days were passed in harmless sports." The laborious life thus touchingly alluded to was that of John Nichols, the first of a family conspicuous in the history of typography. There is an interesting memoir of this worthy and clever man, prefixed to the eighth volume of '*The Percy Correspondence*,' upon which I am about to engage. The author of that memoir, written in 1826, was Alexander Chalmers. He justly describes the subject of his biography as "a man who afforded an eminent exemplar of personal probity, and whose long life was spent in the promotion of useful knowledge. How little do we see of the future! Mr. Nichols had then before him twenty-three years, devoted to as arduous labour as any which he had ever sustained."

John Nichols had a maternal uncle, Lieutenant Thomas Wilmot, who in 1747 was serving under Captain, afterwards Admiral, Barrington. The friends of young Nichols, who had received a decent elementary education, had destined him to serve under his gallant relative. But the death of the Lieutenant put an end to this project. In a lucky hour the boy was apprenticed to the celebrated William Bowyer, who, taken altogether, may be deemed amongst the most famous of English printers; although it is scarcely fair to term him, as he was termed at his death, "the last of learned English printers." The apprentice evinced so much aptitude for his employment, that in a very brief space after his term of servitude he became the partner of his master, and eventually his successor in the business, which had attained no ordinary reputation. It would be tedious to attempt here even the

briefest sketch, not merely of books printed by John Nichols, but of the works upon which he laboured as author or editor. For many a year he was the proprietor and conductor of the 'Gentleman's Magazine.' As a natural consequence his learning was more antiquarian than classical. Of his separate compilations, the best known is 'The History of Leicestershire,' in five ponderous volumes, and the most varied and amusing, his 'Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century.' The 'Percy Correspondence' is a continuation of the previous nine volumes of 'The Anecdotes.' Of this series the first four volumes are compiled by John Nichols, and the fifth volume to the eighth, by his son Bowyer Nichols. From the eighth volume we transcribe the following paper by Dr. Dibdin, which, although overloaded, like other of the works of the learned bibliomaniac, with a little of what is irreverently called 'twaddle,' conveys a pleasing picture of the founder of a most deserving family, in his happy old age:—

VISIT TO AN OCTOGENARIAN.

"July 17, 1823.

"There are few pictures of human life more pleasing to contemplate than that of old age gradually but comfortably declining towards the grave. This comfort, to be complete, must be twofold; first, it must arise from the freedom from bodily pain, and, secondly, from the possession of good spirits and cheerful hopes, resulting from sound principles, and the respect of all those whom we have long known and reciprocally loved. Such is the case with my octogenarian friend SYLVANUS.

"This is the fifth anniversary visit which in concert with a few 'long-known' and highly-valued friends I have just paid that excellent old man. He resides in a somewhat elevated spot—opposite Hampstead and Highgate hills—with a dozen acres of meadow-land before his house, and a garden, well stocked with plants and fruits, behind, not quite one mile distant from Islington Church. Fortunately the day (in this dismal month of rain!) proved to be fine. The sky was dap-

pled ; the breeze blew gently from the south-west ; and the united fragrance of strawberries and mignonette greeted us as we got the first vista-view of his lawn and shrubs. I should, however, premise that a party of us started at a given hour from different points, in different vehicles, and reached the place of rendezvous, not quite with such celerity and precision as the Duke of Wellington put his forces in motion to march, by different routes, to the immortal plains of Vittoria. However, it was agreed that the dinner-hour should be somewhat procrastinated, in order that we might arrive in good time to have a promenade in the garden of the old gentleman, and in that of his son-in-law, who resides hard by.

“ We mustered to the number of five guests. The family of Sylvanus made the number a round dozen. On alighting from my vehicle (in which my legal friend ‘the Mirror for Magistrates’ shared the seat with me—note well, it was a *jarvy chariot*), I was ushered into the drawing-room, though I made rather a *bolt* for the library ; and after a most cordial interchange of salutations, it was proposed that we should enjoy our promised stroll in the garden. The younger part of the visitors were already in motion (the magisterial ‘Mirror’ in the number) upon the lawn ; among whom I quickly discerned the modern Plutarch, and the great traders in classical and theological lore. For myself, I quietly brought up the rear, with my octogenarian friend leaning on my arm, and discoursing cheerily on different topics—of times and literature gone by, or as now existing. We approached a gravel walk to the left, lying snugly under a wall, and exposed to a warm southern sun. ‘There’ (exclaimed my venerable comrade), ‘do you see yon walk ? I owe the last two or three years of my existence (speaking from temporal causes) to regular exercise upon that walk ;’ and as we gained it, methought the octogenarian paced it with an air of conscious gaiety and strength

—like some old admiral who enjoys his stroll upon the quarter-deck every evening towards sunset.

“The mirthful discourse of our friends accelerated our pace, and urged us forward. We reached a green-house, canopied by the leaves of a young and flourishing vine. ‘Please God, my dear friend’ (remarked the octogenarian, pointing with his tortoise-headed cane to the vine), ‘we will have some grapes off yonder stem next year. You remember that I mentioned this to you on your visit here last July?’ I owned that I recollected it; but ‘*next year*,’ to a man of fourscore! Yes! ‘another and another,’ if it please Divine Providence; ‘and why’ (said I to myself, checking the miserable fastidiousness of my meditations), ‘why should it not be so? Or, if this worthy vine-cultivator be deprived of the fruits of his *own* vine during that revolving period, sure I am that he will partake of *other* fruits, not less delicious in flavour, and salutary in effects.’ There was comfort in that correcting thought; and so we strolled and gossipped on, till we joined the phalanx of our friends. On quitting the octogenarian’s garden, we entered that of his son-in-law. It was more spacious, and stocked with a greater variety of fruits. The strawberry, of various species, blushed here; the raspberry reddened there; gooseberries, larger than the largest pearls ‘in an Ethiop’s ear,’ hung down in crimson or green globules, by the side of a well-trimmed path. Here, the ripening currants showed their ruby or amber clusters; there, again, grew the stately artichoke, and the uprising celery. Meanwhile, the full-flowered cauliflower, the knight-pear, of Brobdignagian altitude, the Windsor-bean, begirt by the incipient kidney, each and all seemed clad in full luxuriance, and giving promise of plenteous fare. Nor be the daintier fruits of melon and cucumber omitted; for here they were—the former, bursting their rocky integuments; the latter, thin, tapering, and reminding us of *turbot* enjoyments. Above, glistened the

cherry, while the walls were concealed by trees of the apricot, peach, and fig species—

‘ And dark,
Beneath his ample leaf, the luscious fig.’

“So sings Thomson. But the shout of young voices was heard. The octogenarian’s grandchildren were abroad. In fact, we noticed three or four of them, running, walking, or being drawn in a cart, accompanied by a due body-guard of nursery-maids. Thus we strolled, ate strawberries, patted the children’s cheeks, now praised the weather, and now the garden, till the dinner was announced in due form. I made another effort for the library, and we had actually got possession of it for five minutes, but the announce of dinner pursued us even into that peaceful haunt! To resist, to tarry longer, were fruitless; and so we marched, a procession of twelve, into a well-proportioned dining-room, and sat down to an excellently furnished dinner. I soon recognised my friend the cucumber in the wake of the turbot. But it were equally rude and profitless to describe a dinner—supplied by the hand of hospitality, and demolished by hungry stomachs and grateful hearts. The Rhenish wine, in two poplar-shaped bottles, did not fail to allay thirst and excite applause. ’Twas the savings of the last clear drippings from the Heidelberg Tun. Sempronius loved the Madeira, and the modern Plutarch cleaved to the sherry. There was variety for all tastes, and more than a sufficiency for all cravings. .

“The daughters, and the son, and the son-in-law, and the grandson of the octogenarian, all mingled in discourse; all quaffed the juice of the vine (but not of that in the garden); were all merry, and yet sober and wise. Such a day of joyance is not of ordinary occurrence. And how fared the octogenarian? As gay as the gayest—as hearty as the heartiest—as happy as the happiest; complaining only that he could not

exactly see when the juice of the grape had reached the brim of the glass. But what signifies this dimness of sight, when one thinks of that perfection of *intellectual* vision which all his friends acknowledge it is *his* happiness to enjoy?

“The shades of night were now, however, falling apace :

‘*Majoresque cadunt altis de montibus umbræ.*’

“A string of jarvies enfiladed the doorway. We had our coffee and tea ; exchanged fair words with our fair companions ; talked over the too swiftly-flown revelries ; planned another anniversary visit ; and at half-past ten precisely took our departures, but *not*—

‘—— for fresh woods and pastures new.’

“No : ere the clock struck twelve we were all (with one exception) immured within the walls of London, about to repose on mattress-mounted beds ; for, in the month of July, I do contend that the bed should succumb to the mattress. And how sinks to repose the Father and Son ? I hear, in the prayers of the former, the language of Thomson :

‘Father of light and life, thou good Supreme !
O, teach me what is good, teach me Thyself !’

“And in those of the latter something that reminds me of the filial piety of Pope :

‘Me let the tender office long engage,
To rock the cradle of reposing age ;
With lenient hearts extend a Father’s breath,
Make languor smile, and smooth the bed of death.’

CAPRICORNUS.”

‘The Percy Correspondence’ is thus introduced by its editor, Mr. Bowyer Nichols, as a distinct work:—

“After an interval of many years, I venture to lay before the public a seventh volume of ‘The Literary Illustrations of the Eighteenth Century;’ of which my revered father lived to publish four volumes; and to which two more were added after his decease.

“The correspondence contained in this volume was not in my possession at the completion of the sixth volume, but has been acquired since by public sale. I had no sooner become possessed of this literary treasure, than I felt a strong desire to show my sense of the respect and gratitude I felt to the memory of Bishop Percy, for his uniform kindness to my father and myself, by making a selection from his correspondence, as a portion of ‘The Literary Illustrations’ of the time in which he lived.”

The first letters presented to us by the editor are perhaps amongst the most amusing of the volume, but their position in precedence of earlier correspondence interferes with any endeavour to offer the slightest approach to a chronological view of Percy’s life. Mr. Bowyer Nichols generally presents to us in his illustrations “a tangled chain; nothing impaired, but all disordered.” Here he followed the example of his father, who has in some degree compensated for this defect, by giving us indexes of most unusual fulness, without the aid of which the most readable matters in his volumes would be absolutely buried. But let us proceed without any fault-finding:—

“The letters of and to Dr. James Grainger are the first in point of time, and open to view much of the aspirations of two young authors, ardent in their pursuit of literary distinction. Dr. Percy’s letters to Dr. Birch, and his correspondence with the Rev. George Ashby, are connected with the Bishop’s early works; as those of the Rev. Henry Meen are with his later publications.

“The letters of George Steevens, it is to be regretted, are few, but very characteristic of that lively and satirical writer.

“Nor are the letters of James Boswell less characteristic of the biographer of Johnson. His letters to Percy are followed by others by him, and by some addressed to him, chiefly relative to the character of the great Colossus of literature.”

The following brief sketch of the life of Bishop Percy will save our readers the trouble of referring to more voluminous biographies :—

NOTICE OF BISHOP PERCY, FROM THE ‘EDINBURGH EVENING COURANT,’ OCT. 7, 1811, WRITTEN BY DR. R. ANDERSON.

“Died, at Dromore House, on the 30th September, aged 82, the Right Reverend Dr. Thomas Percy, Lord Bishop of Dromore, well known for more than half a century by various learned and ingenious publications, and distinguished by the most active and exemplary public and private virtues. He was the intimate friend of Shenstone, Johnson, and Goldsmith, and the last of the illustrious association of men of letters who flourished at the commencement of the present reign. He was a native of Bridgenorth in Shropshire, and educated at Christ Church College, Oxford. His first promotion in the Church was to the living of Easton Mauduit, in Northamptonshire, in the gift of his College, which he held with the rectory of Wilby, given him afterwards by the Earl of Sussex. In 1764 he published a new version of the ‘Song of Solomon,’ enriched with a commentary and annotations. The year following he published the ‘Reliques of Ancient English Poetry,’ a work which constitutes an era in the history of English literature in the eighteenth century. The same year he published ‘A Key to the New Testament,’ a concise manual for students of sacred literature, which has been adopted in the Universities, and often reprinted. After the publication of the ‘Reliques,’ he was

invited by the Duke of Northumberland to reside occasionally with him, as his domestic chaplain. In 1769 he was nominated Chaplain in Ordinary to his Majesty; in 1778 promoted to the Deanery of Carlisle, and in 1782 to the Bishopric of Dromore, where he constantly resided, promoting the instruction and comfort of the poor with unremitting attention, and superintending the sacred and civil interests of the diocese with vigilance and assiduity, revered and beloved for his piety, liberality, benevolence, and hospitality, by persons of every rank and religious denomination. He was the last male descendant of the ancient family of Percy. Two daughters survive him; the eldest is married to Ambrose Isted, Esq., of Ecton, in Northamptonshire, and the youngest to the Honourable and Reverend Pierce Meade, Archdeacon of Dromore."

"The aspirations of two young authors" have a peculiar interest, whether those aspirations be realized or not in future success. The early friend of Percy, Dr. James Grainger, is best known as the author of a heavy didactic poem entitled 'The Sugar Cane.' Like 'The Fleece' of Dyer its technical descriptions are too often wearisome; but unlike 'The Fleece' they interest us much less than the descriptions of home manufactures. Grainger, after having been an army surgeon, having served as such in the rebellion of 1745, accepted a situation at St. Christopher's. Here he became familiar with the details of a planter's life. It has been objected to him that he made no protest in his poem against the system of negro slavery. The time was scarcely ripe for such denunciations in the middle of the last century. I will give one passage from 'The Sugar Cane' to show that he looked with a spirit of benevolence upon the scenes around him:—

" Yet, planter, let humanity prevail.—
Perhaps thy negro, in his native land,
Possess large fertile plains, and slaves and herds:
Perhaps whene'er he deign'd to walk abroad,
The richest silks, from where the Indus rolls,
His limbs invested in their gorgeous pleats:
Perhaps he wails his wife, his children, left

To struggle with adversity : perhaps
 Fortune, in battle for his country fought,
 Gave him a captive to his deadliest foe :
 Perhaps, incautious, in his native fields
 (On pleasurable scenes his mind intent)
 All as he wandered, from the neighbouring grove
 Fell ambush dragg'd him to the hated main.—
 Were they even sold for crimes, ye polish'd say !
 Ye, to whom learning opes her amplest page !
 Ye, whom the knowledge of a living God
 Should lead to virtue ! Are ye free from crimes ?
 Ah pity then these uninstructed swains ;
 And still let mercy soften the decrees
 Of rigid justice, with her lenient hand.

“ Oh, did the tender muse possess the power
 Which monarchs have, and monarchs oft abuse,
 'Twould be the fond ambition of her soul
 To quell tyrannic sway ; knock off the chains
 Of heart-debasing slavery ; give to man,
 Of every colour and of every clime,
 Freedom, which stamps him image of his God.
 Then laws, oppression's scourge, fair virtue's prop,
 Offspring of wisdom ! should impartial reign,
 To knit the whole in well-accorded strife :
 Servants, not slaves ; of choice, and not compelled ;
 The blacks should cultivate the cane-land isles.”

The following extracts from the correspondence between Grainger and Percy will speak for themselves :—

EXTRACTS OF LETTERS FROM DR. GRAINGER TO
 REV. T. PERCY.

“ Feb. 1758.

“ I have to thank you for the elegant version you have sent me. I have read it to some folks of real taste, who all approve of it. Mr. Strahan, a particular friend of mine, and some others, are at present upon an extensive plan of a Monthly Chronicle ; and as they have often heard me praise your poetical

talents, they desire me to engage you to furnish them with poetry. They are determined to publish nothing in that way but what is good, and therefore they are very urgent with me for your Scotch song ('O Nannie, wilt thou gang with me?'). Shall I let them have it? It can do you no harm, or rather it will do you honour when the author is named."

"WALLBROOK, *April 14, 1758.*

"You may remember I told you, when last in town, that I had some design of opening honourable trenches against a physician's daughter in the city. I did so, and had the pleasure to find that my artillery had made a sufficient lodgment in the heart of Miss Sophy; but, alas! when I expected the capitulation would have been signed upon my own terms, in stepped a demon called a settlement, and effectually baffled all my pretensions. In short, I have been obliged to raise the siege, and though the governor of the place is wholly in my interest, there are certain Cabinet counsellors, by the vulgar named parents, who make my entry into the fort wholly inexpedient. As I flattered myself with success, and was really fond of the situation, my discomfiture has hurt both my heart and my pride. However, I hope soon to regain my former tranquillity, and, if I feel much uneasiness now, it is chiefly on account of the sweet girl of whom I must no longer think as the partner of my life. As this is the first time I ever seriously thought of matrimony, so I fancy it will be the last; unless my sentiments alter, which I will not pretend to say they will not."

"*Saturday (May 1758).*

"When I tell you that I write you this sitting up in bed, to which I have been confined by a very severe indisposition, you will, my dear Percy, be the less surprised that I have not sooner thanked you for your last most acceptable packet. I heartily

congratulate you on your having found a young lady so every way agreeable to you. . . . And now, my dear friend, that your Annie may have, after the small-pox, the same brilliancy of charms that she at present can boast of, is my most sincere wish."

"BASSETTERRE, *March 25, 1765.*

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—Some weeks ago I wrote you a moderately long letter ; since that was sent I have had the pleasure of one from you, inclosing me your elegant Dedication to Lady Northumberland. I am not very fond of your writing the History of the House of Percy ; it appears to me not only a limited but a disagreeable subject. Can you vindicate (palliatives will not do in a history, whatever they may in a panegyric) the conduct of the old Earl of Northumberland in James the First's time, who was so long imprisoned on account of the Gunpowder Treason ? How can you cast a veil on the conduct of his son, with regard to his gratitude to King Charles ? In short, my friend, *incedis cineri doloso*, and if your patrons cannot bear to hear the severity of historical truth, you should handsomely decline writing the history of their ancestors."

"(*Received in Sept. 1765.*)

"MY DEAREST FRIEND,—I received some weeks ago your invaluable collection of 'Antient Poetry,' and can only say, in commendation thereof, that it afforded me as sincere a pleasure in the perusal as any performance I ever read of your writing. I much approve of the new order in which you have arranged the whole, and I apprehend the reader of taste will find not less entertainment than the mere lover of antiquity. May the Percy family think of your abilities as I do, and then I am sure you will soon enjoy *otium cum dignitate.*"

MRS. GRAINGER TO DR. PERCY.

“EXETER, *Jan. 27, 1771.*”

“DEAR SIR,—. . . I fear you never will forgive me were I not to let you know the likeness of dear Dr. Grainger is in a picture at Sir George Chambers’s, painter, in Edinburgh; a circumstance I never heard till very lately. I am sure it cuts me to the very heart and soul that it is not in my power to send for it; nor do I dare to ask for it for my children. . .

Your affectionate friend.”

The following letter has reference to that beautiful production of Percy’s early muse ‘O! Nanny,’ which the attractive silliness of most modern ballads has not yet entirely condemned to oblivion:—

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER OF ARCHDEACON NARES TO
BISHOP PERCY.

“BRITISH MUSEUM, *Nov. 27, 1801.*”

“Allow me to ask, against I hear from you again, who was the Mr. Carter who made the very beautiful original tune to your elegant ballad, ‘O! Nanny, wilt thou gang wi’ me?’ I think it one of the finest ballad airs that were ever composed: I will not add how fitly bestowed, but the whole effect is admirable. I have heard it harmonized, or thrown into parts, by Harrison, and it was delightful in that form.”

Note.—“Poor Carter, the celebrated composer, died on Friday last, Oct. 12, 1804. He possessed an uncommon share of genius; but his prosperity in life never kept pace with the greatness of his talents. He was the author of many excellent musical pieces and beautiful ballads; among the latter of which were, ‘O! Nanny, wilt thou gang wi’ me!’ ‘Tally Ho!’ &c., &c.”—‘London Evening Post,’ Thursday, Oct. 18. See the ‘Gentleman’s Magazine’ for 1847, vol. xxvii. pp. 376, 481, 604.

The career of George Steevens, as a Shakspeare Commentator, will not require any criticism in this place. Although, like most of his tribe, he was incapable of appreciating Shakspeare as a poet, he was probably led by a genuine love of the Drama to admire the plays, whilst he despised the sonnets. Of this love of theatrical performance we are presented with a curious illustration from the pen of Dr. Dibdin :—

“ Mr. Steevens lived in a retired and eligibly situated house, just on the rise of Hampstead Heath. It was paled in ; and had, immediately before it, a verdant lawn skirted with a variety of picturesque trees. Formerly, this house had been a tavern, which was known by the name of the Upper Flask ; and which my fair readers (if a single female can have the courage to peruse these bibliomaniacal pages) will recollect to have been the same to which Richardson sent Clarissa in one of her escapes from Lovelace. Here Steevens lived, embosomed in books, shrubs, and trees : being either too coy, or too unso-cial, to mingle with his neighbours. His habits were indeed peculiar : not much to be envied or imitated ; as they sometimes betrayed the flights of a madman, and sometimes the asperities of a cynic. His attachments were warm, but fickle both in choice and duration. He would frequently part from one, with whom he had lived on terms of close intimacy, without any assignable cause ; and his enmities, once fixed, were immovable. There was, indeed, a kind of venom in his antipathies ; nor would he suffer his ears to be assailed, or his heart to relent, in favour of those against whom he entertained animosities, however capricious and unfounded. In *one* pursuit only was he consistent : *one* object only did he woo with an inflexible attachment ; and that object was *Dame* Drama. I have sat behind him, within a few years of his death, and watched his sedulous attention to the performances of strolling players, who used to hire a public room in Hampstead ; and towards whom his gallantry was something more substantial than mere

admiration and applause ; for he would make liberal presents of gloves, shoes, and stockings—especially to the female part of the company. His attention, and even delight, during some of the most wretched exhibitions of the dramatic art, was truly surprising ; but he was then drooping under the pressure of age, and what passed before him might serve to remind him of former days, when his discernment was quick and his judgment matured.”

The letters of Steevens in ‘The Percy Correspondence’ have some points of interest in connection with literary history, and occasionally as illustrations of the temper of the writer. The Shakspeare Gallery of Alderman Boydell would naturally excite his attention. He is merciless in his condemnation of the paintings that were fondly supposed to constitute an era in English art ; and is especially severe upon their violations of costume. Nevertheless with all its faults ‘The Shakspeare Gallery’ was a worthy monument of the enterprising liberality of a tradesman who did more for the real encouragement of the arts in England than a host of rich and titled patrons. We step aside from ‘The Percy Correspondence’ to present a letter from Alderman Boydell, which is truly interesting as a piece of autobiography. It was addressed by the worthy printseller to a man of influence, to propound the scheme of a lottery at a time when the course of political events threatened him with almost utter ruin :—

LETTER FROM ALDERMAN BOYDELL TO SIR JOHN ANDERSON.

“CHEAPSIDE, *Feb.* 4, 1804.

“DEAR SIR,—The kindness with which you have undertaken to represent my case, calls upon me to lay open to you, with the utmost candour, the circumstances attending it, which I will now endeavour to do as briefly as possible. It is above sixty years since I began to study the Art of Engraving, in the course of which time, besides employing that long period of life in my profession, with an industry and assiduity that would be improper in me to describe, I have laid out with my brethren, in pro-

moting the commerce of the Fine Arts in this Country, above 350,000*l.* When I first began business, the whole commerce of prints in this country consisted in importing foreign prints, principally from France, to supply the cabinets of the curious in this kingdom. Impressed with the idea that the genius of our own countrymen, if properly encouraged, was equal to that of Foreigners, I set about establishing a *School for Engraving in England*; with what success the public are well acquainted. It is, perhaps, at present sufficient to say, that the whole course of that commerce is changed; very few prints being now imported into this country, while the foreign market is principally supplied with prints from England. In effecting this favourite plan, I have not only spent a long life; but have employed near 40 years of the labour of my nephew, Josiah Boydell, who has been bred to the business, and whose assistance during that period has been greatly instrumental in promoting a school of Engraving in this country. By the blessing of Providence, these exertions have been very successful; not only in that respect, but in a commercial point of view; for the large sums I regularly received from the Continent, previous to the French Revolution, for impressions taken from the numerous plates engraved in England, encouraged me to attempt also an *English School of Historical Painting*. I had observed with indignation, that the want of such a school had been long a favourite topic of opprobrium against this country among foreign writers on national taste. No subject, therefore, could be more appropriate for such a national attempt, than England's inspired Poet, and great Painter of Nature, Shakspeare: and I flatter myself, the most prejudiced Foreigner must allow that the Shakspeare Gallery will convince the world that Englishmen want nothing but the fostering hand of encouragement to bring forth their genius in this line of Art. I might go further; and defy any of the Italian, Flemish, or French Schools, to show, in so short a

space of time, such an exertion as the Shakspeare Gallery ; and if they could have made such an exertion, the pictures would have been marked with all that monotonous sameness which distinguishes those different Schools. Whereas in the Shakspeare gallery every Artist, partaking of the freedom of his country, and endowed with that originality of thinking so peculiar to its nature, has chosen his own road to what he conceived to be excellence, unshackled by the slavish imitation and uniformity that pervade all foreign Schools. This gallery I once flattered myself with being able to have left to that generous public, who have for so long a period encouraged my undertakings : but unfortunately for those connected with the Fine Arts, a Vandalic Revolution has arisen, which, in convulsing all Europe, has entirely extinguished, except in this happy Island, all those who had the taste or the power to promote those Arts ; while the Tyrant that at present governs France, tells that believing and besotted nation, that, in the midst of all his robbery and rapine, he is a great patron and promoter of the Fine Arts ; just as if those Arts that humanize and polish mankind could be promoted by such means, and by such a man. You will excuse, my dear Sir, I am sure, some warmth in an old man on this subject, when I inform you that this unhappy Revolution has cut up by the roots that revenue from the Continent which enabled me to undertake such considerable works in this country. At the same time, as I am laying my case fairly before you, it should not be disguised, that my natural enthusiasm for promoting the Fine Arts (perhaps buoyed up by success) made me improvident. For, had I lain by but ten pounds out of every hundred pounds my plates produced, I should not now have had occasion to trouble my friends, or appeal to the public ; but, on the contrary, I flew with impatience to employ some new Artist with the whole gains of my former undertakings. I see too late my error,

I have but one word to say in extenuation. My receipts from abroad had been so large, and continued so regular, that I at all times found them fully adequate to support my undertakings at home—I could not calculate on the present crisis, which has totally annihilated them. I certainly calculated on some defalcation of these receipts, by a French and Spanish war, or both; but with France or Spain I carried on but little commerce—Flanders, Holland, and Germany, who, no doubt, supplied the rest of Europe, were the great Marts; but alas! they are now no more. The convulsion that has disjoined the whole Continent, I did not foresee—I know no man that did. On that head, therefore, though it has nearly ruined me and mine, I can take but little blame to myself. In this state of things, I throw myself with confidence on that public, who has always been but too partial to my poor endeavours, for the disposal of that which, in happier days, I flattered myself to have presented to them. I know of no means by which that can be effected just now but by a lottery; and if the Legislature will have the goodness to grant a permission for that purpose, they will at least have the assurance of the even tenour of a long life, that it will be fairly and honourably conducted. The objects of it are my Pictures, Galleries, Drawings, &c. &c., which, unconnected with my copper-plates and trade, are much more than sufficient to pay, if properly disposed of, all I owe in the world. I hope you, my dear Sir, and every honest man, at any age, will feel for my anxiety to discharge my debts; but at my advanced age of 85, I feel it becomes doubly desirable.

“I am, dear Sir, with great regard,

“Your obedient and obliged servant,

“JOHN BOYDELL.”

The following are extracts of letters from Steevens to Percy :—

EXTRACT OF LETTERS. STEEVENS TO PERCY ON MILTON.

“HAMPSTEAD HEATH, *April 12, 1797.*

“My chief question is—If Milton had seen all the blank verse your Lordship has amassed, would he have regarded it as of sufficient consequence even to have mitigated his pretensions to originality in that kind of metre? Perhaps not; and especially as so considerable part of it was employed in mere translation. I think (like the Queen in Hamlet) he ‘doth protest too much,’ and yet he might have supposed his declaration to be virtually justifiable.

“I confess I should not have suspected he had been a reader of miserable black-letter trash, if I had not proof of his having occasionally borrowed from it. When, therefore, it could be proved that he had been indebted to such an inglorious original as *Pymlico*, or Runne Red Cappe, &c. 1609, it will not seem unlikely that he might also have looked into the works of Surrey, Marlow, &c.

“Had my amiable friend Tom Warton lived, we might have expected an ample comment on *Paradise Lost*; in the course of which I am sure I could have furnished him with material assistance from the aggregate of our ancient prose and poetry.

“The *Paradise Lost*, *Regained*, and the *Sampson Agonistes*, have not yet been properly edited. Bishop Newton was wholly unacquainted with the Gothic sources of Milton’s imagery. The mere reader of Homer, Virgil, Ariosto, Tasso, and Spenser, is not half equipped for the task of illustrating a writer whose appetite of knowledge led him (like his own Satan)

‘O’er bog, or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare.’

“Mr. Bruce’s *Abyssinian Tour* is also at press, but will be withheld till next winter. It will be dedicated to the Honourable Daines Barrington, with singular propriety, as he is the

only one who possesses credulity enough for the author's purposes."

"I have been so long absent from the literary world that the intelligence I offer you is scarce worth your reading. One circumstance, however, I must not omit. Your antagonist Mr. Ritson, about a month ago, got drunk, and assaulted an inoffensive barber, who brought an action against him, and has obliged him to pay severely for his frolic; a proper warning to critics militant."

"If therefore, my Lord, you are serious, and really have a nephew, I request that my best compliments may be delivered to him, accompanied by a sincere wish that he may live to bring forward some collection equal in merit to the *Reliques*, which (I borrow the very words of your antagonist Ritson) is undoubtedly one of the most delightful books of curiosity and entertainment that was ever published."

"HAMPSTEAD HEATH, Dec. 26, 1796.

"Hence, he (Meen) is always employed, without doing anything; and climbs downward, and advances backward, more adroitly than any other man in the whole circle of my acquaintance. The very table he writes at, and the room he sits in are emblematic of himself; for they contain many articles of value, but in such disorder that nothing wanted can readily be found. In short, my endeavours to render him more useful to your Lordship have hitherto been quite thrown away, and consequently are discontinued."

"'An authentic account of the Shakspearian MSS., &c., by W. H. Ireland,' has made its appearance."

The following letters to and from James Boswell will have an interest even to those who are familiar with his 'Life of Johnson':—

MR. BOSWELL TO BISHOP PERCY.

"AUCHINLECK, 20 March, 1785.

"MY DEAR LORD,—Instead of apologising for not thanking your Lordship sooner for your last kind letter, which was valued by me as it ought to be—I shall follow the maxim *ad eventum festina*, and proceed directly to a subject which affects us mutually—the death of our illustrious friend Dr. Johnson. I certainly need not enlarge on the shock it gave my mind. I do not expect to recover from it: I mean I do not expect that I can ever in this world have so mighty a loss supplied. I gaze after him with an eager eye, and I hope again to be with him.

"It is a great consolation to me now, that I was so assiduous in collecting the wit and wisdom of that wonderful man. It is long since I resolved to write his life—I may say his life and conversation. He was well informed of my intention, and communicated to me a thousand particulars from his earliest years upwards to that dignified intellectual state in which we have beheld him with awe and admiration.

"I am first to publish the 'Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides,' in company with him, which will exhibit a specimen of that wonderful conversation in which wisdom and wit were equally conspicuous. My talent for recording conversation is handsomely acknowledged by your Lordship upon the blank leaf of 'Selden's Table Talk,' with which you were so good as to present me. The 'Life' will be a large work enriched with letters and other original pieces of Dr. Johnson's composition; and as I wish to have the most ample collection I can make, it will be some time before it is ready for publication.

"I am indebted to your Lordship for a copy of Pope's 'Note' concerning him, and for a list of some of his works, which was indeed written down in his presence, uncontradicted; but he corrected it for me when I pressed him. If your Lordship will favour me with anything else of or concerning him I shall be much obliged to you. You must certainly recollect a number of anecdotes. Be pleased to write them down, as you so well can do, and send them to me."

BISHOP PERCY TO MR. BOSWELL.

"DUBLIN, *March 5th*, 1787.

"MY DEAR SIR,—My delay in answering your obliging letter I beg you will ascribe to the true cause, the not being able to satisfy myself that any particulars I could recover concerning our friend Dr. Johnson were worth your notice, much less would answer expectations I had formed myself, or excited in you, when we talked of the subject at a distance. Yet I have often reproached myself for not submitting them to your perusal, such as they were, and at length have determined to send them to you with the addition of a Greek epitaph of Dr. Johnson's on our poor friend Dr. Oliver Goldsmith, which I procured two days ago from Mr. Archdall, of this country, and who had been a pupil of Dr. Sumner's at Harrow, and was recommended by him to Dr. Johnson, who gave him this epitaph, and I send to you his (Mr. Archdall's) own transcript, hoping it will prove a peace-offering, and restore to me the pleasure of your correspondence.

"In conversations of Dr. Johnson and Mrs. Williams, I have heard them mention the following incidents of his childhood:—That he was sent to learn to read, or to improve his reading, to a school-dame at Lichfield, who, upon account of the defect of his eyesight, usually followed him home, lest he should be run over in the streets, and he was so near-sighted

that he was obliged to stoop down on his hands and knees to take a view of the kennel before he ventured to step over it; but if he discovered the old woman following him, he would turn back in anger, and kick her shins. This old dame lived to hear that he was a great author; and once when he came to Lichfield, brought him a present of a pound of gingerbread, declaring he was the best scholar she had ever had.

"After he had gone through Dr. Hunter's grammar-school at Lichfield, his father removed him to that of Stourbridge, where he got him to be received as an assistant to the master, and where he was to have his own instruction gratis for teaching the lesser boys. I have heard him remark, that at one of these he learnt much in the school, but nothing from the master; at the other, much from the master, but nothing in the school. Not far from Stourbridge is the Free Grammar School of Tresull, in Staffordshire, of which I believe Pope endeavoured to procure him to be elected master, by the interest of Lord Gower, as is mentioned in a billet of Pope's to Richardson the painter, of which you have a copy.

"Dr. Johnson's father, before he got him received at Stourbridge, applied to have him admitted as a scholar and assistant to the Rev. Samuel Lea, M.A., Head Master of Newport School, in Shropshire (a very diligent, good teacher, at that time in high reputation, and under whom Mr. Hollis is said, in the 'Memoirs of his Life,' to have been educated, as was afterwards your humble servant). This application to Mr. Lea was not successful; but Johnson had afterward the supreme gratification to hear that this old gentleman (who lived to a very advanced age) mentioned it as one of the most memorable events of his life, that he was very near having 'that great man for his scholar.'

"S. Johnson was at length admitted of Pembroke College, in Oxford, where the pleasure he took in vexing the tutors and

fellows has been often mentioned. But I have heard him say, which ought to be recorded to the honour of the present venerable master of that college, the Rev. William Adams, D.D., who was then very young, and one of the junior fellows, that the mild but judicious expostulations of this worthy man, whose virtue awed him, and whose learning he revered, made him really ashamed of himself, 'though, I fear,' said he, 'I was too proud to own it.'

"I have heard from some of his contemporaries, that he was usually seen lounging at the college gate, with a circle of young students round him, whom he was entertaining with his wit, and keeping from their studies, if not spiriting up to rebellion against the college discipline, which, in his maturer years, he so highly extolled.

"He was accustomed to ascertain the era of his removal to London by recollecting that it happened within a day or two of the catastrophe of Eustace Budgell, who, having loaded his pocket with stones, called a boat, and in the midst of the Thames leaped over, and was drowned. He remembered to have once walked through the New Exchange in the Strand, among the milliners' shops mentioned in the 'Spectator,' before that building was pulled down and converted into private houses.

"When in 1756 or 1757 I became acquainted with him, he told me he had lived twenty years in London, but not very happily.

"The above particulars are what I chiefly remember to have heard him mention of his early life, and you see how little they are worth recording.

"I have neglected to commit to writing the many *bons mots* I have heard fall from Dr. Johnson, and have a treacherous memory; but I recollect one which I heard from him, and which I trust I did not hear in vain, with which I will conclude

this long letter. Being in his company once, when a person told him of a friend of his who had very fine gardens, but had been obliged to apply to his neighbour, with whom he was not upon very cordial terms, for a small piece of adjoining ground, which he thought necessary to complete them. 'See,' said the sage, 'how inordinate desires enslave a man ! One can hardly imagine a more innocent indulgence than to have a fine walk in a garden ; yet, observe, even the desire of this slight gratification, if carried to excess, how it humiliates and enthrals the proudest mind : here is a man submits to beg a favour from one he does not love, because he has made a garden-walk essential to his happiness !'

"I am extremely sorry that I can furnish you with no more of his *bons mots* ; a treacherous memory, and the having neglected to commit them to writing (to my great regret), have now occasioned the loss of all the treasures of this sort, of which you have hoarded so rich a store. Accept the above as a tribute of my respect and regard ; and believe me to be, with my best wishes, dear Sir, your very faithful, humble servant,

"THO. DROMORE."

EXTRACT OF LETTER FROM BISHOP PERCY TO MR. BOSWELL.

"DROMORE HOUSE, *Feb. 28th*, 1788.

"I found lately a memorandum about the Club at the Turk's Head, in Gerard Street, which is at your service. Its first origin you have in Sir John Hawkins's book, and some account of it in Mrs. Piozzi's, but neither of them have noticed what I have heard Johnson mention as the principal or avowed reason for the small number of members to which, for many years, it was limited, viz., at first to eight, and afterwards to twelve. It was intended the Club should consist of such men as that, if only two of them chanced to meet, they should be

able to entertain each other sufficiently, without wishing for more company with whom to pass an evening."

EXTRACT OF LETTER FROM BOSWELL TO BISHOP PERCY.

"LONDON, 9 April, 1790.

"As to suppressing your Lordship's name when relating the very few anecdotes of Johnson with which you have favoured me, I will do anything to oblige your Lordship but that very thing. I owe to the authenticity of my work, to its respectability, and to the credit of my illustrious friends, to introduce as many names of eminent persons as I can. It is comparatively a very small portion which is sanctioned by that of your Lordship, and there is nothing even bordering on impropriety. Believe me, my Lord, you are not the only bishop in the number of great men with which my pages are graced. I am quite resolute in this matter."

Following this letter the editor of 'The Percy Correspondence' says:—

"In Boswell's 'Life of Johnson' are three interesting letters relative to Bishop Percy:—1. A letter from Mr. Boswell to Johnson, upon an unlucky contest in conversation between Johnson and Percy. 2. A letter from Dr. Johnson to Boswell, dated April 3, 1778, warmly praising Dr. Percy, and with which, when afterwards given to him, he was so delighted as to say, 'I would rather have this than degrees from all the universities in Europe.' 3. A letter from Mr. Boswell to Dr. Percy, enclosing the preceding letter."

EXTRACT OF LETTER FROM JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ., TO
ANDREW MITCHELL, ESQ.

"BERLIN, 28 August, 1764.

"I must use you so much with the freedom of a friend as to tell you, that with the vivacity which you allowed me I have

a melancholy disposition. I have made excursions into the fields of amusement, perhaps of folly. I have found that amusement and folly are beneath me, and that without some laudable pursuit my life must be insipid and wearisome. I therefore took the resolution of leaving London, and settled myself for the winter at Utrecht, where I recovered my inclination for study and rational thinking."

EXTRACTS FROM A LETTER OF MISS SEWARD TO JAMES
BOSWELL, ESQ.

"LICHFIELD, *March 25, 1785.*

"On enquiring after Dr. Johnson, she (Mrs. Lucy Porter) has often read one of his recent epistles. As she read, I secretly wondered to perceive that they contained no traces of genius. They might have been any person's composition. When this is the case, it is injudicious to publish such inconclusive testimonies. Several letters of his have appeared in the 'Gentleman's Magazine,' that could interest no one by their intrinsic vigour. They will be eagerly read because they are Johnson's."

"The rustic prettiness and artless manners of her daughter, the present Mrs. Lucy Porter, had won Johnson's youthful heart, when she was upon a visit at my grandfather's in Johnson's school-days. Disgusted by his unsightly form, she had a personal aversion to him, nor could the beautiful verses he addressed to her teach her to endure him. The nymph at length returned to her parents at Birmingham, and was soon forgotten. Business taking Johnson to Birmingham, on the death of his own father, and calling upon his coy mistress there, he found her father dying. He passed all his leisure hours at Mr. Porter's, attending his sick bed; and in a few months after his death asked Mrs. Johnson's consent to marry

the old widow. After expressing her surprise at a request so extraordinary—‘No, Sam, my willing consent you will never have to so preposterous a union. You are not twenty-five, and she is turned fifty; if she had any prudence, this request had never been made to me. Where are your means of subsistence? Porter has died poor, in consequence of his wife’s expensive habits. You have great talents, but as yet have turned them into no profitable channel.’—‘Mother, I have not deceived Mrs. Porter; I have told her the worst of me; that I am of mean extraction; that I have no money; and that I have had an uncle hanged. She replied, that she valued no one more or less for his descent; that she had no more money than myself; and that, though she had not a relation hanged, she had fifty who deserved hanging.’

“And thus became accomplished this very curious amour. Adieu, sir; go on and prosper in your arduous task of presenting to the world the portrait of Johnson’s mind and manners. If faithful, brilliant will be its lights, but deep its shadows.”

EXTRACTS OF CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN BISHOP PERCY
AND EDMUND MALONE, ESQ., RELATIVE TO OLIVER
GOLDSMITH AND HIS FAMILY.

The following letter of Percy to Malone furnishes an interesting illustration of the largeness of heart and the ready benevolence of Percy’s character :—

BISHOP PERCY TO MR. MALONE.

“DUBLIN, *June 16, 1785.*

“I have long owed you my very grateful acknowledgments for a most obliging letter, which contained much interesting information, particularly with respect to Goldsmith’s *Memoirs*. The paper which you have recovered in my own handwriting,

giving dates and many interesting particulars relating to his life, was dictated to me by himself one rainy day, at Northumberland House, and sent by me to Dr. Johnson, which I had concluded to be irrecoverably lost. The other memoranda on the subject were transmitted to me by his brother and others of his family, to afford materials for a life of Goldsmith, which Johnson was to write and publish for their benefit. But he utterly forgot them and the subject ; so that when he composed Goldsmith's epitaph, he gave a wrong place for that of his birth—*Elphin*, which is accordingly so sculptured in Westminster Abbey.

“Goldsmith has an only brother living, a cabinet-maker, who has been a decent tradesman, a very honest, worthy man, but he has been very unfortunate, and is at this time in great indigence. It has occurred to such of us here as were acquainted with the Doctor, to print an edition of his poems, chiefly under the direction of the Bishop of Killaloe and myself, and prefix a new correct life of the author, for the poor man's benefit ; and to get you, and Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mr. Stevens, &c., to recommend the same in England, especially among the members of the club. If we can but subsist this poor man at present, and relieve him from immediate indigence, Mr. Orde, our Secretary of State, has given us hope that he will procure him some little place that will make him easy for life ; and then we shall have shown our regard for the departed bard by relieving his only brother, and so far as I hear, the only one of his family that wants relief.”

“*July 3, 1785.*

“I am leaving Dublin to return for the summer to Dromore, where, in a very agreeable situation in all other respects, I have only to regret my great distance from the literary world. I see publications about as soon as they would reach the East

Indies. Although I endeavour to get the reviews, magazines, &c., I am often eight months in arrear. But I am endeavouring to open a communication, through Liverpool and Newry, for a supply of these necessary publications; and if I can accomplish it, will beg leave to inform you of the mode, &c., for I find it often as difficult to get parcels sent me from Dublin as from London itself. Thus circumstanced, I must feel double gratitude for a letter full of literary intelligence like your last."

" Oct. 17, 1786.

"I received only three days ago your very obliging favour of September 28th; nor did your former shorter letter which you mention ever come to hand; a misfortune which, I fear, often happens to letters to and from me, for our post-office here is not well-conducted."

" Oct. 17, 1786.

"In the mean time, I must entreat you to exert all your influence among the gentlemen of the club, and particularly urge it on Sir Joshua Reynolds, to procure subscriptions for the present relief of poor Maurice Goldsmith, who is suffering great penury and distress, being not only poor but very unhealthy. I procured him a present supply of between thirty and forty guineas last year, but fear his creditors will not suffer much of that money to remain with him. These demands being so far satisfied, further relief would probably reach himself, and remain with him to his great comfort. Our new Society of Arts and Sciences have made him mace-bearer; but without present subsistence, I fear he will not live to derive the future emoluments. A guinea a-piece from the members of the club would be a great relief to him."

" Feb. 12, 1787.

"I reminded Mr. Orde to-day of his promise to give some little place to Goldsmith's poor brother, and he kindly engaged

to do something for him soon. In the mean time, however, the poor creature is starving. Lord Charlemont made him mace-bearer to the Academy, but he has got no salary."

"April 14th, 1787.

"Mr. Orde has lately done a handsome thing, which ought to be mentioned to his honour, and we have accordingly reported it in the 'Freeman's Journal.' He has given a snug little place in the Licence Office to Maurice Goldsmith, in honour of his brother's literary merit, which, with the Mace-bearer's office in the Royal Academy, and the money we hope to get by subscription to his brother's Works, we hope will make the poor man easy for life."

"About 1788.

"Dr. Wilson's very curious letter, which you thought lost, I have happily in my possession, so that we may readily compile a good, at least a correct, account of the principal events of Dr. Goldsmith's life; and, with the assistance of one or other of his friends may be able to fill up an account for almost all the time he spent from his leaving Edinburgh till he rose to public notice."

MR. MALONE TO BISHOP PERCY.

"Oct. 25, 1803.

"Not being able to execute your commission in person, I wrote to my friend Mr. Bindley, of the Stamp Office, from whom I have received a most satisfactory answer on the subject of your inquiry. He found out Mr. Charles Goldsmith, though he does not now live at No. 1, Dorset Place, and the house has changed inhabitants twice since he left it. Goldsmith waited on Mr. Bindley, and it seems he has been out of England for a year, in consequence of which he never got your Lordship's

letter. He narrowly escaped being imprisoned in France. His present abode is No. 19, Southampton Street, Pentonville, Islington. He said he would write soon to you, and seemed much pleased at the prospect of receiving some emolument from his brother's work, whom Mr. Bindley says he much resembles in person, speech and manner.—E. MALONE."

"QUEEN ANNE STREET, *Sept.* 28, 1807.

"I can myself, from personal knowledge, witness to the truth of your character of Goldsmith, for I never observed any of these grimaces or fooleries that the interpolator talks of, nor could I ever assent to Lord Orford's pointed sentence, that he was 'an inspired idiot,' which was said and circulated merely for the sake of the point, without any regard to just representation. I always made battle against Boswell's representation of him also, in the *Life of Johnson*; and often expressed my opinion that he rated Goldsmith much too low.—E. MALONE."

I conclude this formidable collection from 'The Percy Correspondence' with a letter which takes us back to the early years of the good bishop, in which he achieved that labour which has given him a claim to the veneration of all lovers of our ancient poetry:—

BISHOP PERCY TO ARCHDEACON NARES.

"DROMORE HOUSE, *Dec.* 28, 1804.

"DEAR SIR,—I should long since have acknowledged your last favour, wherein you were so good as to offer to insert in the 'British Critic' for October any corrections or additions to your account of Ritson's book in that of September, but that number I received too late to avail myself of your obliging offer. I therefore thought that perhaps it might be as well if I submitted a few remarks, if you approved of them, to be subjoined in a note to your mention of Ritson's book in your general pre-

face or introduction to the present twenty-fourth volume ; and, as that, if I mistake not, is usually delivered along with the 'British Critic' for January, I hope these will not come too late, which a great influx of business, in the present declining state of my sight, has prevented me from attending to sooner.

"I find by Ritson's malignity in suppressing any reference to my 'Essay on the Ancient Metrical Romances,' that you have supposed his quotation was taken from Mr. Ellis ; but I do not think this of so much consequence as his wicked attempts to wound my moral feelings. On this subject, what if you were to subjoin the following note?—

"'Mr. Ritson has disgraced his pages by the most illiberal abuse of the Editor of the 'Reliques,' &c. and by vile insinuations against his veracity ; yet these, I think, every reader of discernment will find self-confuted. For when he says, in his note p. 107, that Mr. Steevens had assured him that the Bishop of Dromore's nephew had never seen one word of the Advertisement prefixed to the last edition, to which his name is subscribed, he must suppose the subscriber not to have the curiosity of the most common or illiterate reader. This falsehood, therefore, confutes itself.

"'So again, in p. 142, he would excite suspicion from Mr. Tyrwhitt's not having seen the old MS. although that is fully accounted for in the advertisement above mentioned. And he further adds, 'nor would the late excellent Geo. Steevens, on the Bishop's personal application, consent to sanction the authenticity of the printed copy,' *scil.* of the Reliques, 'with his signature.' Now the reader may be assured that while the last edition was preparing, the old MS. in question was left for near a year with Mr. Nichols, the printer ; and all the original Editor's friends and acquaintance invited to inspect it. Among these, Mr. Steevens, calling one morning, spent an hour or two in examining the MS. and minutely collated one of those pieces

extracted from it, which are declared to be printed verbatim from the original. With the exactness of this he professed himself so well satisfied, that he allowed his name to be appealed to among those of the other gentlemen mentioned in the Advertisement. Now from this short inspection it was impossible that he could be desired to 'sanction,' 'with his signature' the printed copy of the work in general, as this base and malignant detractor would insinuate.

"It is sufficient to mention these two instances to put the reader on his guard against the other false insinuations and defamatory assertions scattered through every part of the work above mentioned, which, as Ritson derived all he knew on the subject originally from the Bishop, and had never received the least provocation, can only be accounted for from his avowed hatred of *all Priests and Priestcraft* (for so he styled religion and its ministers), which he carried to such a horrible excess, that he was engaged in a work to prove our Blessed Saviour an impostor, when a dreadful paroxysm of frenzy put an end to his existence.'

"You will probably think the above sufficient for your present purpose; although, indeed, Ritson's whole Introduction, and many of his notes, are filled with petty cavils and contradictions without proof, of everything I had advanced in my several essays, which perhaps, your readers may be desired to examine before they assent to his opinions. But whatever use you make of the above, believe me to be, with our best wishes and compliments of the season to you and Mrs. Nares,

"Dear Sir,

"Your very humble and obedient servant,

"THOS. DROMORE."

CHAPTER XII.

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF ROBERT SOUTHEY.

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UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF ROBERT SOUTHEY.

1797—1800.

EVERY new illustration of the career of a distinguished author must be considered valuable as a contribution to literary history. Robert Southey, if not entitled to the highest place amongst the poets of the nineteenth century, may be justly considered amongst the best of its prose writers. He was probably the most voluminous of historians, critics, and essayists in a period when condensation was not held as one of the best attributes of an original thinker who desired to convey his thoughts in the most forcible language. The style of Southey, though diffuse, was always clear, and "gentle yet not dull:" although it can scarcely be said that it was "without o'er-flowing, full." He did too often overflow into large quartos which have become rather the materials of history than history itself.

By the kindness of a very dear friend, the daughter of a gentleman who resided upon his estate at Burton, near Christchurch, in Hampshire, during the period when Southey occasionally dwelt in that village, we have had access to a series of interesting letters which are strikingly characteristic of the young author in his enthusiastic period of aspirations for a happier future for his country. Not the slightest allusion to Charles Biddlecombe, the kind and intelligent friend to whom these unpublished letters were addressed is to be found in the six volumes of 'The Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey,' edited by his son, the Rev. Charles Cuthbert Southey, M.A. But in that work are to be found occasional traces of Southey's life at Burton, with notices of friends whose acquaintance he had made in that pleasant sea-side retreat. The Rev. Mr. Southey's biographical work commences with 'Recollections of the Early Life of Robert Southey,' written by himself. This autobiographic sketch goes no farther than the boy's experience of Westminster School. His career was here abruptly

closed by a proceeding which reflects indelible disgrace on the head master of that establishment. Tyranny, whether in statesmen or schoolmasters, was then held to be a virtue, and the reformer of abuses, political or scholastic, was hunted down as a dangerous enemy of social order. The circumstances which banished Robert Southey from a public school are thus narrated by his son:—"Having attained the upper classes of the school, in conjunction with several of his more particular friends he set on foot a periodical entitled 'The Flagellant,' which reached only nine numbers, when a sarcastic attack on corporal punishment, as then inflicted, it seems somewhat unsparingly, at Westminster, roused the wrath of Dr. Vincent, the head master, who immediately commences a prosecution for libel against the publisher.

"This seems to have been a harsh and extraordinary proceeding, for the master's authority, judiciously exercised, might surely have controlled or stopped the publication, neither was there anything in the paper itself which ought to have made a wise man angry; like most of the others, it is merely a schoolboy's imitation of a paper in the 'Spectator' or 'Rambler.' A letter of complaint from an unfortunate victim to the rod is supposed to have been called forth by the previous numbers, and the writer now comments on this, and enters into a dissertation on flogging, with various quotations, ascribing its invention to the author of all evil. The signature was a feigned one; but my father immediately acknowledged himself the writer, and reluctantly apologised. The Doctor's wrath, however, was not to be appeased, and he was compelled to leave the school."

This dismissal took place in 1792. About this time the affairs of his father, who was a linendraper in Bristol, became embarrassed. The youth's maternal uncle, the Rev. Herbert Hill, who had borne up to this time the expense of his education, still held out to him the protecting hand of a kind and good man. In 1793 he was entered at Balliol after having been refused admission to Christchurch by the Dean. The freedom of the young man's opinions rendered him unfit for a collegiate life, although for two years he was a hard student with the world all before him where to choose. His friend Lovell had married a Miss Fricker, of Bristol; and in November, 1795, Southey and Coleridge on the same day united themselves to her two sisters.

Having thus brought up the notice of Southey's career to the period when he was embarked upon the troubled sea of a merely literary life, we proceed to introduce his unpublished letters to Charles Biddle-

combe, with a few extracts from the Rev. Mr. Southey's second volume, which contains a notice or two of his father's sojourn at Burton:—

"In 1799, having succeeded in finding lodgings at Burton, near Christ Church, my father and mother settled themselves there for the summer months, which passed very happily. Here his mother joined them from Bath, and his brother Thomas, then a midshipman on board the 'Phoebe' frigate, who, having lately been taken by the French, had just been released from a short imprisonment at Brest. They had also at this time a young friend domesticated with them, Mr. Charles Lloyd, son of a banker at Birmingham, who had been living for some time with Mr. Coleridge at Nether Stowey, in Somersetshire, and who subsequently became known as an author, and coming to reside at Westmoreland, was classed among the later poets. Here also Mr. Cottle visited them, and here my father first became acquainted with Mr. Rickman (late one of the clerks of the House of Commons), who will hereafter appear as one of his most constant correspondents and most valued friends.

"It has already been mentioned, that during my father's residence at Burton, in Hampshire, he had made the acquaintance of Mr. Rickman, at that time residing there. This had soon ripened into an intimacy, and a friendship and correspondence had now commenced, which continued through life; Mr. Rickman being not only, as Mr. Justice Talfourd well names him, 'the sturdiest of jovial companions,' and, as Charles Lamb equally well describes him, 'fullest of matter with least verbosity,' but also a man of vast and practical knowledge upon almost all subjects, of the kindest heart, and unwearied in offices of friendship."

This is a just tribute to the social qualities of Mr. Rickman, who has a high claim upon the gratitude of his countrymen, as a laborious political economist, who matured the plan of our Population Returns, and by whom the census of 1801, of 1811, of 1821, and of 1831 were superintended. The letters which have been preserved of Southey to Charles Biddlecombe, and which we now first publish from faded manuscripts, will be sufficient to show that there was another friend at Burton to whom Southey was warmly attached. It could not be otherwise with any one who knew this cheerful companion in the days when his kind nature, capacious understanding, and varied acquirements rendered his friendship a prize worth possessing.

ROBERT SOUTHEY TO CHARLES BIDDLECOMBE, ESQ.

“BATH, Oct. 16, 1797.

“MY DEAR SIR,—I have at last seen Warner, though somewhat ashamed to call upon him after so long a delay. The first time I set out with that intent a previous call delayed me till too late an hour. The second time I found he had changed his quarters, and it was not till Thursday last that I made a third and successful attempt. They tell me he has made some curious discoveries among the records of Bath, and I likewise hear that he calculates upon the certain sale of a number of copies to Libraries and the purchasers of topographical history, a branch of literature which certainly has its use, but which no human genius can make tolerably agreeable. I hope some day to find him at his books and get among his old chronicles.

“Will you be good enough at your leisure to extract for me two passages from your old Edmond Howes. The one an anecdote of La Hire, page 352. The other the only instance I have met with of throwing the spear in the Greek manner, page 383.

“I have laboured much at ‘Joan of Arc’ since I left Burton. Everything palpably miraculous is omitted. Of course the beginning is altered, and you will find the first 350 lines new. My new lines amount to about a thousand. The book is in the press.

“Amos Cottle has translated the ‘Edda’ of *Scœmund*, which will speedily be published. I am now writing a poem which he means to prefix to his book—the first part is descriptive of Burton scenery—and I have not forgotten my old friend St. Catherine’s Hill.

“My brother is now with Lord Bridport on board the ‘*Mars*.’

Lloyd and Edith are well, and join me in remembrance to you and Mrs. Biddlecombe and Rickman. How is the gout?

“God bless you, yours truly,

“ROBERT SOUTHEY.”

ROBERT SOUTHEY TO CHARLES BIDDLECOMBE, ESQ.

“LONDON, 24 Dec. 1797.

“I thank you for the letter and the extracts which it contained. They have their place among the notes, where old Edmond Howes makes a very respectable appearance. I have regretted that I did not extract his history of the fashions, &c., which he remembered; if you can find room in your trunk when you come to town and will stow the old book there, I should like to redeem this negligence. May we not expect soon to see you in London? The chance of seeing friends who live far away is among the few advantages this detestable city offers. As yet I know not where you will find me, for we are about to quit our present situation. But you shall know our new situation as soon as we are settled in it, and should you arrive before that, you may always learn at Johnson’s. In the interim direct under cover to C. W. Williams Wynn, No. 5, Stone Buildings, Lincoln’s Inn. He is now out of town for a few days, or the borough of Old Sarum should have saved you sevenpence.

“Warner got himself into a scrape at Bath by a foolish and false assertion from the pulpit respecting the death of poor Mary Godwin. He publicly acknowledged that he had been mistaken, and this ought to have satisfied everybody, but when I left Bath, an anonymous pamphlet was expected against him, and it is rumoured (I know not with what truth) that Godwin himself means to notice the circumstance. I am sorry for all this. No person could have been more angry with Warner

than I was ; had I heard his sermon I would have contradicted him in the church, but his confession that he had been mistaken satisfied me and should have satisfied everybody.

“My book proceeds very slowly, owing to the printer’s delay. This has in one view been advantageous to me, as the new knowledge I am constantly acquiring collateral to the subject, is not too late to be made use of. There is a Library in Red Cross Street belonging to the Dissenters, from which by permission of Dr. Towers, one of the trustees, I am permitted to take what books I want. I have found considerable pleasure in disturbing the dust and the cobwebs, and have got much dirt there and much information.

“I am now engaged in the poetical department of the ‘Critical Review.’ Nothing of mine has appeared yet, and the next number will only contain some articles in the ‘Monthly Catalogue.’ I have mentioned this as Mr. Willis takes the Review and you may perhaps feel inclined to see my criticisms. You would be astonished at the load of trash they send me.

“Among my employment I must not forget the most important—Coke. I am obediently diligent in reading this man’s Commentaries—but I am not obedient enough to think it a good book for the young student. It is so completely unmethodical that I think it should only be read after a man was a tolerable lawyer. For my own part I find I know something of everything, but have no arranged knowledge. It is like reading ‘Wanley’s Wonders’ or ‘Seward’s Anecdotes’ to learn History. I envy you who have done with these things, and often wish myself again at Burton. Certainly, I deem some regular employment necessary for most men—some professional study to fix them. But for myself I am so thoroughly fond of literary pursuits, that it is not by this principle I can reconcile myself to law. Luckily there is a stronger motive, and unluckily that motive applies to me.

"Remember us to your mother, Rickman, &c., and Miss Barnes.

"God bless you, yours truly,
"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

ROBERT SOUTHEY TO C. BIDDLECOMBE, ESQ.

"Monday, January 1st, 1798.

"Your letter followed Wynn to Brighthelmstone, and in consequence did not reach me till Saturday. The black seal somewhat alarmed me, but I sincerely congratulate you upon the occasion.

"I have introduced no name in the epitaph, because I knew it not—a sufficient reason, you will think. Indeed, the name appears to me only necessary when it is upon some remarkable character. I have made it what I think such inscriptions should be, short, plain of language, and with a religious sentiment.

"‘The quiet virtues of domestic life
Were his who lies below ; therefore his paths
Were paths of pleasantness, and in that hour
When all the perishable joys of earth
Desert the desolate heart, he had the hope,
The sure and certain hope, of joy in heaven.’

"I have written two for your choice, and if neither of them express what you wish, let me know, and you shall have more.

"‘The tenant of this grave was one who lived
Remembering God, and in the hour of death
Faith was his comforter. O you who read,
Remember your Creator and your Judge,
And live in fear that you may die in hope.’

"The quakerism of theeing and thouing in poetry has crowded our versification with harsh contractions, and monosyllables unutterably bad, such as *read'st*. To avoid this in short

poems, I sometimes use *you* as in conversation. The only reason for tutoying as the Aristocrats call it, is because it is uncommon, not being the customary mode of speech ; but if this be a sufficient reason, it should make us now adopt the opposite phrases, as certainly uncommon in verse.

"I by no means wish you to extract the passage from Howes ; it is far too long, and I wished to have it as a curious paper by me, not for any immediate purpose. When an opportunity offers of sending it to town, I can copy it at leisure.

"What Warner asserted in his sermon was, that Mary Godwin, though a woman of such great and acknowledged talents, died in great agony of mind because she doubted the truth of Christianity. It was false. What her opinions on religion were I know not, farther than that all her books express her full belief in a future state. But I know from Carlisle, who was with her the last four days and nights of her illness, that no woman ever left this world with more dignified composure.

"The papers tell us of a wreck near Peverel Point—about the place where the 'Halsewell' was lost. I suppose the Christ Church shore has again been covered with the spoils. My brother has escaped an engagement by quitting the 'Phœbe,' at which I suspect his friends rejoice somewhat more than he does himself.

"We have removed our quarters to No. 12 Lamb's Conduit Street. We intend to remain here till we can suit ourselves better, some few weeks certainly ; so whenever you please to consign the turkey here, we will receive him with all due honours. I hope old Way will not go into mourning at the turkey's departure. Did I tell you that that poem of mine in the 'Monthly Magazine' for October, which they have nicknamed a plaintive tale instead of a plain one, was occasioned by the story of that poor girl whose funeral we met going to Way's? and whose history I learnt from our hostess, Miss

Barnes. I did not add anything to the tale. The Aristocrats have found out that such poems are very Jacobinical, and Canning and Nares have given me the title of the Jacobine Poet, and regularly abused me once a week since the 'Anti-Jacobine' made its appearance. They are the best advertisements in the world, and will soon ridicule my book into a third edition. God bless you; remember us to your mother and Mrs. Coleman.

"Yours affectionately,

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

ROBERT SOUTHEY TO C. BIDDLECOMBE, ESQ.

"BATH, May 6, 1798.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I thank you for your enquiries for my brother. He arrived here this morning soon after your letter, from which you will readily conclude that his wounds are slight and in a fair way. He has three wounds, made with a pike in an attempt to board 'L'Hercule'; his escape was almost miraculous, he fell at the second thrust between the two ships, and he caught a rope as he fell.

"Poor Captain Hood is much regretted by all who knew him; my brother had experienced uncommon kindness from him, and he attended him to his grave."

ROBERT SOUTHEY TO C. BIDDLECOMBE, ESQ.

"Your letter, my dear friend, has deeply affected me. I knew nothing of your loss; if I had, I would immediately have written—not to have intruded on you with idle consolations, but at least to say that we think of you in your affliction. I know not how to address you; to say much were impertinence—and yet the silence of a friend is unkind. These things make one tremble. God bless you. God comfort you. There

is at least this mercy in affliction, that it compels us to the only source of consolation.

"We have often thought of you with thankfulness, and regard and pleasure. We shall think of you more frequently now in sorrow. Your little girl—I hope she will be spared—but the life of an infant is even more uncertain than our own. It is dangerous to fix our affections on earth—and yet, unless we do, what is existence!

"God bless you. I will write again soon, and often—anything that but for a moment engages your attention now must be relief. I write on the immediate receipt of your letter—Edith knows not yet your loss, but she will feel with you. Once more, God bless you.

"Yours most affectionately,

"R. SOUTHEY.

"April 6, '99."

[EXTRACTS.]

"I am busy in printing the 'Anthology'—which, if I greatly err not, will make a volume of no common merit.

"We were much disappointed in not seeing you. To stop at Bath without proceeding to Bristol is somewhat like 'stopping at Hounslow.' At Bath they can only show you build-ings, and ball-rooms, and fine ladies. Here we have manu-factories, and science, and men of talent. I am sufficiently proud of my birthplace. I expect to see Rickman here before my return, and heartily glad shall I be to see him.

"The French displease me more than anything else in the world, except our own cursed and stupid and ruinous and ras-cally ministers. Bonaparte's letter was open and manly, and as polite as policy could require, or court urbanity dictate. The answer was a confused jumble of personal insults and contradictory assertions. The two letters were sad as might

have been expected from the two writers. I expect nothing from Governments. The amelioration of mankind must be the work of individuals,—of this I am convinced, and the conviction is a consolation and a stimulus.

“Coleridge’s Ode, for which you enquire, is printed in a quarto eighteen-pennyworth of his poems by Johnson, for which you must enquire by the title of ‘Fears in Solitude;’ but I have the pamphlet at Burton—and the ode is of so little value, that Coleridge has requested me to reprint the other poems there, in the ‘Anthology,’ and let that die and be forgotten according to its deserts.

“The ‘Thirty Letters’ are probably out of print, and to be only met with by means of catalogue hunting. I will turn over Lackington’s, to see if they are there.

“Will you help forward a charitable work and assist the subscription for Chatterton? I enclose a few of the prospectus as briefs. We have about 200 names—and we ought to have 1000, and I shall have with a little exertion on the part of our friends.

“I shall return with much satisfaction to Burton, to witness alterations and improvements. Edith and my mother join in remembrances to your mother and Mr. Coleman.

“Yours truly,

“R. SOUTHEY.

“KINGSDOWN PARADE, 20 Jan. 1800.”

[EXTRACTS.]

“France improves, and Bonaparte is using his ill-gotten power with unequalled wisdom and mildness and magnanimity. This is a great man! perhaps only second to Alexander in extent of views and promptness of action. Alas for England! and what will become of us should the Prince of Wales die? An infant Queen, a long minority—with the Queen for Regent

and Pitt for our perpetual Minister ! and all the loyalties that would rally round the infant, and rivet our chains. God forbid that the Prince of Wales should die. I hope Lisbon will restore him."

"Sunday, 9 March, 1800."

ROBERT SOUTHEY TO C. BIDDLECOMBE, ESQ.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—You will probably be surprised at the contents of this letter. You were, however, I believe, aware that the when and where of my departure from England were to be determined by advice from Lisbon, whither I had written stating to my uncle the nature of my disorder, and the advice which had been uniformly given with regard to its remedy. My uncle's reply leaves me no choice, even if I were desirous of deferring my embarkation—for he has engaged a house for me, and arranged everything as to furniture and establishment,—so that we are now in all the hurry of preparation, designing if possible to set out for Falmouth on this day fortnight.

"I design to employ myself in Portugal with collecting materials and information for the complete History of that kingdom—a history fertile in magnificent actions. No country was ever more splendid in its rise, or more instructive in its decline. This will be a work of much labour, but the execution will interest me, and the end be important.

"Portugal is so small a country, that a few easy journeys will make me well acquainted with it, and enable me to understand every field of battle, and every siege ; an important advantage, not easily attainable in any other country. How I go on in health and in occupations you shall of course from time to time be acquainted with.

"It is very satisfactory to me to have my destination settled,

and also that it is settled in this way. I left Lisbon with enough regret—and with enough attachment to place and persons, to render the return there an object of much pleasant anticipation. Besides, tho' my tongue be not—my ears are ready at the language, and a little serious application in the country will make me no despicable Portuguese, and I can already talk a very understandable lingo. The voyage is the most unpleasant business—I anticipate high winds and low spirits; and my inside—with the very recollection of past sickness, threatens me and omens intestinal insurrections.

“This morning I am going with Rickman to ramble all over Redcliff Church—a huge and magnificent building. You will easily imagine that the arrangement of my papers, and all worldly concerns, occupies me very much. Rickman has been my amanuensis, and saved me some trouble—still I have much to do.

“My mother and Edith desire to be remembered. God bless you! I could have wished to shake you by the hand before my departure if it were possible.

“Yours affectionately,

“ROBERT SOUTHEY.

“*Monday, March 24, 1800.*”

CHAPTER XIII.

CHRISTOPHER NORTH AND JOHN WILSON.

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CHRISTOPHER NORTH AND JOHN WILSON.

“WE believe that there is a genius in all childhood. But the creative joy that makes it great in its simplicity dies a natural death, or is killed, and genius dies with it. In favoured spirits, neither few nor many, the joy and the might survive ; for you must know that unless it be accompanied with imagination, memory is cold and lifeless. The forms it brings before us must be inspired with beauty—that is, with affection or passion. All minds, even the dullest, remember the days of their youth ; but all cannot bring back the indescribable brightness of that blessed season. They who would know what they once were, must not merely recollect, but they must imagine, the hills and valleys—if any such there were—in which their childhood played, the torrents, the waterfalls, the lakes, the heather, the rocks, the heavens’ imperial dome, the raven floating only a little lower than the eagle in the sky. To imagine what he then heard and saw, he must imagine his own nature. He must collect from many vanished hours the power of his untamed heart, and he must, perhaps, transfuse also something of his maturer mind into these dreams of his former being, thus linking the past with the present by a continuous chain, which, though often invisible, is never broken. So it is, too, with the calmer affections that have grown within the shelter of a roof. We do not merely remember, we imagine our father’s home, the fireside, all his features then most living, now dead and buried ; the very

manner of his smile, every tone of his voice. We must combine with all the passionate and plastic power of imagination the spirit of a thousand happy hours into one moment ; and we must invest with all that we ever felt to be venerable such an image as alone can satisfy our filial hearts. It is thus that imagination, which first aided the growth of all our holiest and happiest affections, can preserve them to us unimpaired :—

‘ For she can give us back the dead,
Even in the loveliest looks they bore.’ ”

Thus ‘ Christopher North ’ teaches us the secret of his own intense reality ; and thus John Wilson explains how it is that *his* personality is so little hidden by the fictitious character which he chose to assume. Wilson’s perfect fulfilment of what he so justly considers the requirements of autobiography make ‘ Christopher North ’ a much truer picture of himself than is to be found in the pages of many a writer who attempts to portray himself undisguised by any such fancy dress. If imagination be wanting to the Autobiographer, his childhood is a stunted manhood, or his boyhood but a bigger childhood. Not thus is it with ‘ Christopher North.’ How real is the following picture of a healthy, happy boy !—a boy who, in his exuberant animal spirits, is not incapable even of the cruelty of setting his terrier to kill a cat :—

“ No doubt, at the time, such things will wear rather a suspicious character ; and the boy who is detected in the fact, must be punished by pawmy, or privation, or imprisonment from play. But when punished, he is of course left free to resume his atrocious career ; nor is it found that he sleeps a whit the less soundly, or shrieks for Heaven’s mercy in his dreams. Conscience is not a craven. Groans belong to guilt. But fun and frolic, even when trespasses, are not guilt ; and though a cat have nine lives, she has but one ghost, and that will haunt no house where there are terriers. What ! surely if you have the happiness of being a parent, you would not wish your only boy—your son and heir—the blended image of his mother’s loveliness and his father’s manly beauty—to be

a smug, smooth, prim, and proper prig, with his hair always combed down on his forehead, hands always unglaured, and without spot or blemish on his white-thread stockings? You would not wish him, surely, to be always moping and musing in a corner with a good book held close to his nose; botanizing with his maiden aunts; doing the pretty at tea-tables with tabbies, in handing round the short-bread, taking cups, and attending to the kettle; telling tales on all naughty boys and girls; laying up his penny a-week pocket-money in a penny jug; keeping all his clothes neatly folded up in an untumbled drawer; having his own peg for his uncrushed hat; saying his prayers precisely as the clock strikes nine, while his companions are yet at blind-man's buff; and puffed up every Sabbath-eve by the parson's praises of his uncommon memory for a sermon, while all the other boys are scolded for having fallen asleep before tenthly? You would not wish him, surely, to write sermons himself at his tender years, nay—even to be able to give you chapter and verse for every quotation from the Bible? No. Better far that he should begin early to break your heart, by taking no care even of his Sunday clothes; blotting his copy; impiously pinning pieces of paper to the dominie's tail, who to him was a second father; going to the fishing, not only without leave but against orders; bathing in the forbidden pool, where the tailor was drowned; drying powder before the school-room fire, and blowing himself and two crack-skulled cronies to the ceiling; tying kettles to the tails of dogs; shooting an old woman's laying hen; galloping bare-backed shelties down stony steepes; climbing trees to the slenderest twig on which bird could build, and up the tooth-of-time-indented sides of old castles after wall-flowers and starlings; being run away with in carts by colts against turnpike gates; buying bad ballads from young gipsy-girls, who, on receiving a sixpence, give ever so many kisses in return, saying,

'Take your change out of that;' on a broken-knee'd pony, with a switch tail—a devil for galloping—not only attending country races for a saddle and collar, but entering for and winning the prize; dancing like a devil in barns at kirns; seeing his blooming partner home over the blooming heather, most perilous adventure of all in which virgin-puberty can be involved; fighting with a rival in corduroy breeches, and poll shorn beneath a caup, till his eyes just twinkle through the swollen blue; and, to conclude 'this strange eventful history,' once brought home at one o'clock in the morning, God knows whence or by whom, and found by the shrieking servant, sent out to listen for him in the moonlight, dead drunk on the gravel at the gate!

"Nay, start not, parental reader; nor, in the terror of anticipation, send, without loss of a single day, for your son at a distant academy, mayhap pursuing even such another career. Trust thou to the genial, gracious, and benign *vis medicatrix naturæ*. What though a few clouds bedim and deform 'the innocent brightness of the new-born day'? Lo! how splendid the meridian ether! What though the frost seem to blight the beauty of the budding and blowing rose? Look how she revives beneath dew, rain, and sunshine, till your eyes can even scarce endure the lustre! What though the waters of the sullen fen seem to pollute the snow of the swan? They fall off from her expanded wings, and, pure as a spirit, she soars away, and descends into her own silver lake, stainless as the water-lilies floating round her breast. And shall the immortal soul suffer lasting contamination from the transient chances of its nascent state—in this, less favoured than material and immaterial things that perish? No, it is undergoing endless transmigrations: every hour a being different, yet the same; dark stains blotted out; rueful inscriptions effaced; many an erasure of impressions once thought

permanent, but soon altogether forgotten ; and vindicating, in the midst of the earthly corruption in which it is immersed, its own celestial origin, character, and end, often flickering, or seemingly blown out, like a taper in the wind ; but all at once self-reilluminated, and shining in inextinguishable and self-fed radiance, like a star in heaven.

“Therefore, bad as boys too often are, and a disgrace to the mother who bore him—the cradle in which they were rocked—the nurse by whom they were suckled—the school-master by whom they were flogged—and the hangman by whom it was prophesied they were to be executed ; wait patiently for a few years, and you will see them all transfigured, one into a preacher of such winning eloquence, that he almost persuades all men to be Christians ; another into a parliamentary orator, who commands the applause of listening senates, and

‘ Reads his history in a nation’s eyes ;’

one into a painter, before whose thunderous heavens the storms of Poussin ‘pale their ineffectual fires’ ; another into a poet, composing and playing, side by side, on his own peculiar harp, in a concert of vocal and instrumental music, with Byron, Scott, and Wordsworth ; one into a great soldier, who, when Wellington is no more, shall, for the freedom of the world, conquer a future Waterloo ; another who, hoisting his flag on the ‘mast of some tall ammiral,’ shall, like Eliab Harvey in the *Temeraire*, lay two three-deckers on board at once, and clothe some now nameless peak or promontory in immortal glory, like that shining on Trafalgar.”

So it is with Christopher’s boyhood. Through all the hard, coarse animal nature always occasionally predominant in a true boy, we never lose sight of “the taper” which is one day to become a star “shining in inextinguishable and self-fed radiance.” And we know that this light is not the creation of the maturer mind, but the proof that the continuous

unbroken chain, which links the past to the present, is not of memory only, but of fact. The taper burns very brightly when young Christopher is mourning for a lost playmate:—

“Oh! blame not boys for so soon forgetting one another, in absence or in death. Yet forgetting is not just the very word; call it rather a reconciliation to doom and destiny, in thus obeying a benign law of nature that soon streams sunshine over the shadows of the grave. Not otherwise could all the ongoings of this world be continued. The nascent spirit outgrows much in which it once found all delight; and thoughts delightful still, thoughts of the faces and the voices of the dead, perish not, lying sometimes in slumber, sometimes in sleep. It belongs not to the blessed season and genius of youth, to hug to its heart useless and unavailing griefs. Images of the well-beloved, when they themselves are in the mould, come and go, no unfrequent visitants, through the meditative hush of solitude. But our main business—our prime joys and our prime sorrows—ought to be, must be, with the living. Duty demands it; and love, who would pine to death over the bones of the dead, soon fastens upon other objects with eyes and voices to smile and whisper an answer to all his vows. So was it with us. Ere the midsummer sun had withered the flowers that spring had sprinkled over our Godfrey’s grave, youth vindicated its own right to happiness; and we felt that we did wrong to visit too often that corner in the kirkyard. No fears had we of any too oblivious tendencies; in our dreams we saw him—most often all alive as ever—sometimes a phantom away from that grave! If the morning light was frequently hard to be endured, bursting suddenly upon us along with the feeling that he was dead, it more frequently cheered and gladdened us with resignation, and sent us forth a fit playmate to the dawn that rang with all sounds of joy. Again we found ourselves angling down the river, or along the

loch,—once more following the flight of the falcon along the woods—eying the eagle on the echo-cliff. Days passed by without so much as one thought of Emilius Godfrey, pursuing our pastime with all our passion, reading our books intently, just as if he had never been ! But often and often, too, we thought we saw his figure coming down the hill straight towards us ; his very figure—we could not be deceived—but the love-raised ghost disappeared on a sudden, the grief-woven spectre melted into the mist. The strength, that formerly had come from his counsels, now began to grow up of itself within our own unassisted being. The world of nature became more our own, moulded and modified by all our own feelings and fancies ; and with a bolder and more original eye we saw the smoke from the sprinkled cottages, and read the faces of the mountaineers on their way to their work, or coming and going to the house of God.”

But it is not the loving heart only of the boy Christopher which so clearly points out his close relationship to John Wilson. In the following sketch we see the future poet and philosopher in the midst of that intense love of nature and of sport, which kept the boyish spirit alive in old age, just as the love of the great and good had awakened a manly spirit even in childhood :—

“Forgotten all human dwellings, and all the thoughts and feelings that abide by firesides, and doorways, and rooms, and roofs ; delightful was it, during the long, long midsummer holiday, to lie all alone, on the greensward of some moor-surrounded mount, not far from the foot of some range of cliffs, and with our face up to the sky, wait, unwearily, till a speck was seen to cross the blue cloudless lift, and steadying itself after a minute's quivering into motionless rest, as if hung suspended there by the counteracting attraction of heaven and earth, known to be a falcon ! Balanced far above its prey, and, soon as the right moment came, ready to pounce down, and fly

away with the treasure in its talons to its crying eyry ! If no such speck were for hours visible in the ether, doubtless dream upon dream, rising unbidden, and all of their own wild accord, congenial with the wilderness, did, like phantasmagoria, pass to and fro, backwards and forwards, along the darkened curtain of our imagination, all the lights of reason being extinguished or removed ! In that trance, not unheard, although scarcely noticed, was the cry of the curlew, the murmur of the little moorland burn, or the din, almost like clashing, of the far-off loch. 'Twas thus that the senses, in their most languid state, ministered to the fancy, and fed her for a future day, when all the imagery then received so imperfectly, and in broken fragments, into her mysterious keeping, was to arise in orderly array, and to form a world more lovely and more romantic even than the reality, which then lay hushed or whispering, glittering or gloomy, in the outward air. For the senses hear and see all things in their seeming slumbers, from all the impulses that come to them in solitude gaining more, far more, than they have lost ! When we are awake, or half awake, or almost sunk into a sleep, they are ceaselessly gathering materials for the thinking and feeling soul ; and it is hers, in a deep delight formed of memory and imagination, to put them together by a divine plastic power, in which she is almost, as it were, a very creator. Till she could so look on beauty and on grandeur such as this earth and these heavens never saw, products of her own immortal and immaterial energies, and BEING once, to BE for ever, when the universe, with all its suns and systems, is no more !

“ But oftener we and our shadows glided along the gloom at the foot of the cliffs, ear-led by the incessant cry of the young hawks in their nests, ever hungry except when asleep. Left to themselves, when the old birds are hunting, an hour's want of food is felt to be famine, and you hear the cry of the callow

creatures, angry with one another, and it may be, fighting with soft beak and pointless claws, till a living lump of down tumbles over the rock-ledge, soon to be picked to the bone by insects, who likewise all live upon prey ; for example, ants of carrion. Get you behind that briery bield, that wild-rose hanging rock, far and wide scenting the wilderness with a faint perfume ; or into that cell, almost a parlour, with a Gothic roof formed by large stones leaning one against the other and so arrested, as they tumbled from the frost-riven breast of the precipice. Wait there, though it should be for hours—but it will not be for hours ; for both the old hawks are circling the sky, one over the marsh and one over the wood. She comes—she comes—the female sparrowhawk, twice the size of her mate ; and while he is plain in his dress, as a cunning and cruel quaker, she is gay and gaudy as a Demirep dressed for the pit of the opera—deep and broad her bosom, with an air of luxury in her eyes that glitter like a serpent's. But now she is a mother, and plays a mother's part—greedier, even than for herself, for her greedy young. The lightning flashes from the cave-mouth, and she comes tumbling, and clashing, and rattling through the dwarf bushes on the cliff-face, perpendicular and plump-down, within three yards of her murderer. Her husband will not visit his nest this day—no—nor all night long ; for a father's is not as a mother's love. Your only chance of killing him too, is to take a lynx-eyed circuit round about all the moors within half a league ; and possibly you may see him sitting on some cairn, or stone, or tree-stump, afraid to fly either hither or thither, perplexed by the sudden death he saw appearing among the unaccountable smoke, scenting it yet with his fine nostrils, so as to be unwary of your approach. Hazard a long shot—for you are right behind him—and a slug may hit him on the head, and, following the feathers, split his skull-cap and scatter his brains. 'Tis done, and the eyry is

orphan'd. Let the small brown moorland birds twitter Io Pæan, as they hang balanced on the bulrushes—let the stone-chat glance less fearfully within shelter of the old grey cairn—let the cushat coo his joyous gratitude in the wood, and the lark soar up to heaven, afraid no more of a demon descending from the cloud. As for the imps in the eyry, let them die of rage and hunger, for there must always be pain in the world ; and 'tis well when its endurance by the savage is the cause of pleasure to the sweet—when the gore-yearning cry of the cruel is drowned in the song of the kind at feed or play—and the tribes of the peace-loving rejoice in the despair and death of the robbers and shedders of blood."

Here is a picture of the outward surroundings which served to mould this healthful nature :—

"And happy were we, Christopher North, happy were we in the parish in which Fate delivered us up to Nature, that, under her tuition, our destinies might be fulfilled. A parish ! Why it was in itself a kingdom—a world. Thirty miles long by twenty at the broadest, and five at the narrowest ; and is not that a kingdom—is not that a world worthy of any monarch that ever wore a crown ? Was it level ? Yes, league-long levels were in it of greensward, hard as the sand of the sea-shore, yet springy 'and elastic, fit training-ground for Childers, or Eclipse, or Hamiltonian, or Smolensko, or for a charge of cavalry in some great pitched battle, while artillery might keep playing against artillery from innumerable affronting hills. Was it boggy ? Yes, black bogs were there, which extorted a panegyric from the roving Irishman in his richest brogue—bogs in which forests had of old been buried, and armies with all their banners. Was it hilly ? Ay, there the white sheep nibbled, and the black cattle grazed ; there they baa'd and they lowed upon a thousand hills—a crowd of cones, all green as emerald.

Was it mountainous? Give answer from afar, ye mist-shrouded summits, and ye clouds cloven by the eagle's wing! But whether ye be indeed mountains, or whether ye be clouds, who can tell, bedazzled as are his eyes by that long-linging sunset, that drenches heaven and earth in one indistinguishable glory, setting the West on fire, as if the final conflagration were begun! Was it woody? Hush, hush, and you will hear a pine-cone drop in the central silence of a forest—a silent and solitary wilderness—in which you may wander a whole day long, unaccompanied but by the cushat, the corby, the falcon, the roe, and they are all shy of human feet, and, like thoughts, pass away in a moment; so if you long for less fleeting farewells from the native dwellers in the wood, lo! the bright brown queen of the butterflies, gay and gaudy in her glancings through the solitude, the dragon-fly whizzing bird-like over the pools in the glade; and, if your ear desire music, the robin and the wren may haply trill you a few notes among the briery rocks, or the bold blackbird open wide his yellow bill in his holly-tree, and set the squirrels a-leaping all within reach of his ringing roundelay. Any rivers? one—to whom a thousand torrents are tributary—as he himself is tributary to the sea. Any lochs? How many we know not—for we never counted them twice alike—omitting perhaps some forgotten tarns, or counting twice over some one of our more darling waters, worthy to dash their waves against the sides of ships—alone wanting to the magnificence of those inland seas! Yes—it was as level, as boggy, as hilly, as mountainous, as woody, as lochy, and as rivery a parish, as ever laughed to scorn Colonel Mudge and his trigonometrical survey.

“Was not that a noble parish for apprenticeship in sports and pastimes of a great master? No need of any teacher. On the wings of joy we were borne over the bosom of nature, and learnt all things worthy and needful to be learnt, by instinct first, and afterwards by reason.” . . .

"Nature must be black and barren indeed to possess no power over the young spirit daily expanding on her breast into new susceptibilities, that ere long are felt to fill life to overflowing with a perpetual succession—an infinite series—of enjoyments. Nowhere is she destitute of that power—not on naked sea-shores—not in central deserts. But our boyhood was environed by the beautiful—its home was among moors and mountains, which people in towns and cities called dreary, but which we knew to be the cheerfullest and most gladsome parish in all braid Scotland—and well it might be, for it was in her very heart. Mountains they seemed to us in those days, though now we believe they were only hills. But such hills!—undulating far and wide away, till the highest, even on clear days, seemed to touch the sky, and in cloudy weather were verily a part of heaven. Many a valley, and many a glen—and many a hollow that was neither valley nor glen—and many a flat, of but a few green acres, which we thought plains—and many a cleft waterless, with its birks and brechans, except when the rains came down, and then they all sang a new song in merry chorus—and many a wood, and many a grove, for it takes no great number of trees to make a wood, and four firs by themselves in a lonesome place are a grove—and many a single sycamore, and many a single ash, kenned far off above its protected cottage—and many an indescribable spot of scenery, at once pastoral, and agricultural, and silvan, where, if house there was, you hardly knew it among the rocks: so was our parish, which people in towns and cities called dreary, composed."

Now that we have seen Christopher's inanimate companions, let us turn to the human objects of his warm affections:—

"My Father's House! How it is ringing like a grove in spring, with the din of creatures happier, a thousand times happier, than all the birds on earth. It is the Christmas

holidays—Christmas-day itself—Christmas night—and joy in every bosom intensifies love. Never before were we brothers and sisters so dear to one another; never before had our hearts so yearned towards the authors of our being—our blissful being! There they sit—silent in all that outcry—composed in all that disarray—still in all that tumult; yet, as one or other flying imp sweeps round the chair, a father's hand will playfully strive to catch a prisoner—a mother's gentler touch on some sylph's disordered symar be felt almost as a reproof, and for a moment slacken the fairy-flight. One old game treads on the heels of another—twenty within the hour—and many a new game never heard of before nor since—struck out by the collision of kindred spirits in their glee, the transitory fancies of genius inventive through very delight. . . .

“Then came a new series of Christmasses, celebrated, one year in this family, another year in that—none present but those whom Charles Lamb the Delightful calleth the ‘old familiar faces;’ something in all features, and all tones of voice, and all manners, betokening origin from one root—relations all, happy, and with no reason either to be ashamed or proud of their neither high nor humble birth—their lot being cast within that pleasant realm, ‘the Golden Mean,’ where the dwellings are connecting links between the hut and the hall—fair edifices resembling manse or mansion-house, according as the atmosphere expands or contracts their dimensions—in which competence is next-door neighbour to wealth, and both of them within the daily walk of contentment.

“Merry Christmasses they were indeed—one lady always presiding, with a figure that once had been the stateliest among the stately, but then somewhat bent, without being bowed down, beneath an easy weight of most venerable years. Sweet was her tremulous voice to all her grandchildren's ears. Nor did those solemn eyes, bedimmed into a pathetic beauty, in any

degree restrain the glee that sparkled in orbs that had as yet shed not many tears, but tears of joy or pity. Dearly she loved all those mortal creatures whom she was soon about to leave; but she sat in sunshine even within the shadow of death; and the 'voice that called her home' had so long been whispering in her ear, that its accents had become dear to her, and consolatory every word that was heard in the silence, as from another world.

"Whether we were indeed all so witty as we thought ourselves—uncles, aunts, brothers, sisters, nephews, nieces, cousins, and 'the rest,' it might be presumptuous in us, who were considered by ourselves and a few others not the least amusing of the whole set, at this distance of time to decide—especially in the affirmative; but how the roof did ring with sally, pun, retort, and repartee! Ay, with pun—a species of impertinence for which we have therefore a kindness even to this day. Had incomparable Thomas Hood had the good fortune to have been born a cousin of ours, how, with that fine fancy of his, would he have shone at those Christmas festivals, eclipsing us all! Our family, through all its different branches, has ever been famous for bad voices, but good ears; and we think we hear ourselves—all those uncles and aunts, nephews and nieces, and cousins, singing now! Easy is it to 'warble melody,' as to breathe air. But we hope harmony is the most difficult of all things to people in general, for to us it was impossible; and what attempts ours used to be at seconds! Yet the most woful failures were rapturously encored; and ere the night was done, we spoke with most extraordinary voices indeed, every one hoarser than another, till at last, walking home with a fair cousin, there was nothing left for it but a tender glance of the eye—a tender pressure of the hand—for cousins are not altogether sisters, and although partaking of

that dearest character, possess, it may be, some peculiar and appropriate charms of their own. . . .

“All hail ! rising beautiful and magnificent through the mists of morning—ye woods, groves, towers, and temples, overshadowing that famous stream beloved by all the muses ! Through this midnight hush, methinks we hear faint and far-off sacred music—

‘Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault,
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise !’

How steeped now in the stillness of moonlight are all those pale, pillared churches, courts and cloisters, shrines and altars, with here and there a statue standing in the shade, or monument sacred to the memory of the pious—the immortal dead. Some great clock is striking from one of many domes—from the majestic tower of St. Mary Magdalen—and in the deepened hush that follows the solemn sound, the mingling waters of the Cherwell and the Isis soften the severe silence of the holy night.

“Remote from kindred, and from all the friendships that were the native growth of the fair fields where our boyhood and our youth had roamed, and meditated, and dreamed, those were indeed years of high and lofty mood which held us in converse with the shades of great poets and sages of old in Rhedicyna’s hallowed groves, still, serene, and solemn, as that Attic Academe where divine Plato, with all Hybla on his lips, discoursed such excellent music that his life seemed to the imagination spiritualized—a dim reminiscence of some former state of being. How sank then the Christmas Service of that beautiful Liturgy into our hearts ! Not faithless we to the simple worship that our forefathers had loved ; but conscience told us there was no apostasy in the feelings that rose within us when that deep organ began to blow, that choir of youthful

voices so sweetly to join the diapason—our eyes fixed all the while on that divine picture over the altar of Our Saviour

‘ Bearing his cross up rueful Calvary.’

“ The city of Palaces disappears, and in the setting sunlight we behold mountains of soft crimson snow ! The sun hath set, and even more beautiful are the bright-starred nights of winter, than summer in all its glories beneath the broad moons of June. Through the woods of Windermere, from cottage to cottage, by coppice-pathways winding up to dwellings among the hill-rocks where the birch-trees cease to grow—

‘ Nodding their heads, before us go,
The merry minstrelsy.’

“ They sing a salutation at every door, familiarly naming old and young by their Christian names ; and the eyes that look upward from the vales to the hanging huts among the flats and cliffs, see the shadows of the dancers ever and anon crossing the light of the star-like window, and the merry music is heard like an echo dwelling in the sky. Across those humble thresholds often did we in Christmas-week nights of yore—wandering through our solitary silvan haunts, under the branches of trees within whose hollow trunk the squirrel slept—venture in, unasked, perhaps, but not unwelcome, and, in the kindly spirit of the season, did our best to merryify the festival by tale or song.”

The bad voice, and the ear fine enough for melody, but not for harmony, are part of the thin veil which Christopher North throws over John Wilson. Mrs. Gordon writes of her father, “ His singing was charming, uncultivated as it was by study ; no one could listen to it without admiration or a touched heart. His voice was exquisitely sweet, which, combined with the pathos he infused into every note, and expressed in each word, made the pleasure of hearing him a thing to be remembered for ever.” Christopher’s own opinion of his voice is also

contradicted by his friend, the Shepherd, who says of it, "I think Socrates maun hae had just sic a voice. Ye canna weel ca't saft, for even in its laigh notes there is a sort of birr; a sort of dirl that betokens power. Ye canna ca't hairsh; for, angry as ye may be at times, its aye in tune, frae the fineness o' your ear for music."

Whenever the attributes of Christopher North oppose, instead of merely idealizing, the attributes of John Wilson, we cease to believe in him. Though we had never heard of "The Professor" amongst his children and grandchildren, we should know that Christopher was no "old barren bachelor." Only a life complete in all the essentials of domestic happiness could, towards its close, produce a character such as is thus described:—

"A green old age is the most loving season of life, for almost all the other passions are then dead or dying—or the mind, no more at the mercy of a troubled heart, compares the little pleasure their gratification can ever yield now with what it could at any time long ago, and lets them rest. Envy is the worst disturber or embitterer of man's declining years; but it does not deserve the name of a passion, and is a disease, not of the poor in spirit—for they are blessed—but of the mean, and then they indeed are cursed. For our own parts we know envy but as we have studied it in others—and never felt it except towards the wise and good, and then 'twas a longing desire to be like them—painful only when we thought that might never be, and that all our loftiest aspirations might be in vain."

How incredible is the fiction of a barren old bachelor-hood as the outward state of such an inner life as is shown in the following sketch:—

"Who will complain of the shortness of human life, that can re-travel all the windings, and wanderings, and mazes that his feet have trodden since the farthest back hour at which memory pauses, baffled and blindfolded, as she vainly tries to

penetrate and illumine the palpable, the impervious darkness that shrouds the few first years of our inscrutable being? Long, long, long ago seems it to be indeed, when we now remember it, the time we first pulled the primroses on the sunny braes, wondering in our first blissful emotions of beauty at the leaves with a softness all their own—a yellowness nowhere else so vivid—‘the bright consummate flower’ so starlike to our awakened imagination among the lowly grass—lovely indeed to our admiring eyes as any one of all the stars that, in their turn, did seem themselves like flowers in the blue fields of heaven! Long, long, long ago, the time when we danced hand-in-hand with our golden-haired sister! Long, long, long ago, the day on which she died—the hour, so far more dismal than any hour that can now darken us on this earth, when her coffin descended slowly, slowly into the horrid clay, and we were borne deathlike, and wishing to die, out of the churchyard, that, from that moment, we thought we could enter never more! What a multitudinous being must ours have been, when, before our boyhood was gone, we could have forgotten her buried face! Or at the dream of it, dashed off a tear, and away, with a bounding heart, in the midst of a cloud of playmates, breaking into fragments on the hill-side, and hurrying round the shores of those wild moorland lochs, in vain hope to surprise the heron that slowly uplifted his blue bulk, and floated away, regardless of our shouts, to the old castle woods. It is all like a reminiscence of some other state of existence.

“Then, after all the joys and sorrows of those few years, which we now call transitory, but which our BOYHOOD felt as if they would be endless—as if they would endure for ever—arose upon us the glorious dawning of another ‘new life—YOUTH—with its insupportable sunshine, and its agitating storms. Transitory, too, we now know, and well deserving the same name of dream. But while it lasted, long, various, and agonizing ;

as, unable to sustain the eyes that first revealed to us the light of love, we hurried away from the parting hour, and, looking up to moon and stars, invoked in sacred oaths, hugged the very heavens to our heart. Yet life had not then nearly reached its meridian, journeying up the sunbright firmament. How long hung it there exulting, when 'it flamed on the forehead of the noontide sky!' 'Let not the time be computed by the lights and shadows of the years, but by the innumerable array of visionary thoughts, that kept deploying as if from one eternity into another'—now in dark, sullen masses, now in long array, brightened as if with spear-points and standards, and moving along through chasm, abyss, and forest, and over the summits of the highest mountains, to the sound of ethereal music, now warlike and tempestuous—now, as 'from flutes and soft recorders' accompanying not pæans of victory but hymns of peace. That life, too, seems, now that it is gone, to have been of a thousand years. Is it gone? Its skirts are yet hovering on the horizon. And is there yet another life destined for us? That life which men fear to face—age, old age! Four dreams within a dream—and *where* to awake?"

This passage brings us at once from the ideal to the real—from the "dream" of Christopher North to the vivid episode of sunshine and storm which agitated the youth of John Wilson. There is little trace of the lawless murderer of cats in the loving youth who thus writes to his "Margaret," the "Orphan Maid," to whom, before the end of his eighteenth year, he had become deeply and, as he then thought, unalterably attached:—

"Whenever I thought of writing to you, I thought of the distance I was from you, of the sadness I suffered when I bade you farewell, and the loss of almost all the happiness I enjoy in this world by no longer seeing you. All this quite overpowered me, and I could no more have written to you than I could tell you that forenoon I last saw you not to forget me

when I was away. Your letter has revived me ; and if you have any regard for me—which I believe you have—oh, write often, often ! You know I am unhappy ; comfort me, comfort me ! A few lines will delight me, and you are too kind to refuse me such a gratification. It will also serve to keep you in remembrance of me, when, perhaps, you might otherwise forget me, which, should it ever happen, would complete my sum of wretchedness. . . . Once, when I was unhappy, I had only to step across the street, hear your voice, see your face, take hold of your hand, and for a time I forgot all my sorrow. This now I cannot do. At night I sit in a lonely room, nobody within many miles of me I love, left to my own meditation, and the power of darkness, which I have long detested.

“ I think of sad things and weep the more, because I have no hope of relief. In such moments what a treasure will your picture be to me ! How it will delight me ; make me forget everything on earth but you, and you looking like what you were when you agreed at last to give it to me. Would to God it were here ! When, Margaret, you see how happy it will make me, how could you refuse it ? And yet to give it me was goodness I had no title to expect, and for which I will often thank you in moments of stillness and solitude. Oh, what a treasure is a friend like you ! How little is real friendship understood ! Who would ever conceive the happiness I have felt when with you, or so much as dream the misery I endured when I left you for a long, long time ! As long as there is a moon or stars in the firmament will I remember you ; and when I look on either the recollection of Dychmont Hill, the house, the trees, the wooden seat, which I am grieved is away, will enter my mind, and make me live over again the happiest period of my existence. Last night I was in heaven. I dreamed that I was sitting in the drawing-room at College

Buildings with you alone, as I have often done. The room was dark, the window-shutters close ; the fire was little, and just twinkling. I had my feet upon the fender ; you were sitting in the arm-chair ; I was beside you ; your hand was in mine ; we were speaking of my going to Oxford ; you were promising to write me ; I was sad, but happy ; somebody opened the door, and I awoke alone and miserable."

To his friend Robert Findlay, Wilson writes at this time :—

"What will time do to such love as mine ? It is not passion founded on whim and fancy ; it is not a feeling of her excellent disposition resembling friendship ; it is not a regard that intimacy preserved, but whose force absence may diminish. Such feelings constitute the common love of common souls. But with me the case is different. No holy throb ever agitates my heart ; no idea of future happiness ever elevates my spirit ; no rush of tenderness ever warms every fibre of my frame, that Margaret is not the cause and object of such emotions. If such a being were to confess she loved me ; if she were to sink upon my breast with love and fondness, I would be the happiest being that ever lived among men. I feel I have a mind that could then exert itself, and a heart that would love all the human race. But if this union is denied me ; if she I love reposes on the bosom of another, then is the chain broke which bound me to the world ; I have nothing to live for ; all is dark, solitary, cold, wild, and fearful. When Margaret is married, on that night that gives her to another, if I am in any part of this island, you must pass that night with me. Blair will do the same. I don't expect, indeed I won't suffer, either of you to soothe the agony of my soul, for that surely were a vain attempt. But you will sit with me. I know I could never pass that night alone. I would crush to death this cursed heart which has so long tormented me, and bless with

my latest breath my own Margaret ; for she is mine in the secret dwellings of the soul, and not a power in the universe shall tear her from that hospitable home. When I consider the ways of Providence I am astonished. Whoever marries her, let his virtues be what they may, I know he never could make her as happy as I could. He would not love her with so vast and yet so tender a love."

The fear of a rival appears to have been unfounded. Other causes, however, rendered this union hopeless. Four years later Wilson writes to the same friend:—

"There is not one ray of hope that I shall ever be able to make my mother listen for a moment to the subject nearest my heart. I know her violent feelings too well ; I even know this, that if I were to acquaint her with my love for Margaret, we never could again be on the footing of mother and son."

The hopes which had been indulged for seven years were sacrificed to filial love. Wilson's nature was, however, too sound and healthful to be lastingly injured by this disappointment. In spite of his forebodings of life-long desolation, in less than four years he claims Findlay's sympathy in his happiness, as he had formerly claimed it in his despair:—

"AMBLESIDE, *May 11, 1811.*

"DEAREST ROBERT,—I was this morning married to Jane Penny, and doubt not of receiving your blessing, which, from your brotherly heart, will delight me, and doubtless not be unheard by the Almighty. She is in gentleness, innocence, sense, and feeling, surpassed by no woman, and has remained pure, as from her Maker's hands. Surely if I know myself I am not deficient in kindness and gentleness of nature, and will to my dying hour love, honour, and worship her. It is a mild and peaceful day, and my spirit feels calm and blessed. You know what it is to possess a beloved woman's affections, and such possession now makes me return grateful thanks to

my God, and remember former afflictions with resignation and gratitude. On this tranquil day of nature and delight, to think of my earliest; best, oh! best-beloved friend, I may say, adds a solemn feeling to my dreams, and your most affectionate heart will, I am sure, be made glad to hear such words from my lips. In my heart you will ever live among images of overpowering tenderness; and to hear from you when convenient will ever gladden him who never felt, thought, or uttered words to you but those of affection and gratitude. God bless you, my dearest Robert, your wife, and all that you love!

“I am, your kindest brother,

“JOHN WILSON.”

The following letter, written five years later, shows that the promises of the “mild and peaceful day” had not been falsified:—

“ELLERAY, *Sept. 28th, 1816.*

“MY DEAREST WIFE,—I have not half a minute to spare. Immediately on receiving this, send me the inventory of everything at Ellera. If it is too large to go by post, copy it over in one long sheet, and send it off on Thursday. If it can go by post, write on Tuesday—same day you receive this. On receiving your letter to-morrow, I will write you at length, and tell you when I come home, which will be immediately. It was impossible to leave this hitherto, for reasons I will explain. You will have heard of Maggy since I saw her. I will see her on Wednesday, and tell you all about her. Whatever my anxieties or sorrows are or may be in this life, I have in your affection a happiness paramount to all on earth, and I think that I am happier in the frowns of fortune, with that angelic nature, than perhaps even if we had been living in affluence. God for ever bless you, and my sweet family, is the prayer of your loving and affectionate husband.”

The "frowns of fortune" here referred to signify the loss of his entire fortune through an uncle's breach of trust. This loss obliged him to give up his beautiful home at Elleray. Christopher North exclaims:—

"And can it be that we have forsaken Thee! Fairyland and Love-land of our youth! Hath imagination left our brain, and passion our heart, so that we can bear banishment from Thee and yet endure life? Such loss not yet is ours—witness these gushing tears. But duty, 'stern daughter of the voice of God,' dooms us to breathe our morning and evening orisons far from hearing and sight of Thee, whose music and whose light continue gladdening other ears and other eyes—as if ours had there never listened—and never gazed. As if thy worshipper—and sun! moon! and stars! he asks ye if he loved not you and your images—as if thy worshipper—O Windermere! were dead. And does duty dispense no reward to them who sacrifice at her bidding what was once the very soul of life. Yes! an exceeding great reward—ample as the heart's desire—for contentment is born of obedience—where no repinings are, the wings of thought are impeded beyond the power of the eagle's plumes; and happy are we now—with the human smiles and voices we love even more than thine, thou fairest region of nature! happier than when we rippled in our pinnace through the billowy moonlight—than when we sat alone on the mountain within the thunder-cloud. . . .

"And now that we behold them not, are all those woods, and cliffs, and rivers, and tarns, and lakes, as beautiful as when they softened and brightened beneath our living eyes, half-creating, as they gazed, the very world they worshipped? And are all those hearths as bright as of yore, without the shadow of our figure? And the roofs, do they ring as mirthfully, though our voice be forgotten? We hang over Westmoreland, an unobserved, but observant star. Mountains, hills, rocks,

knolls, vales, woods, groves, single trees, dwellings—all asleep ! O Lakes ! but ye are, indeed, by far too beautiful ! O fortunate Isles ! too fair for human habitation, fit abode for the Blest ! It will not hide itself—it will not sink into the earth—it will rise, and risen, it will stand steady with its shadow in the overpowering moonlight, that ONE TREE ! that ONE HOUSE !—and well might the sight of ye two together—were it harder—break your heart. But hard at all it is not—therefore it is but crushed.”

Wilson's magnanimity with regard to this pecuniary injury is strikingly exhibited in the following letter to De Quincy, which is also interesting from its childlike simplicity, and the unconscious self-laudation which so forcibly reminds us of Christopher's innocent pride in himself:—

“ *Sunday Evening, June, 1829.*

“MY DEAR DE QUINCY,—I had intended calling at the Nab to-morrow, to know whether or not you had left Edinburgh ; but from the ‘ *Literary Gazette*,’ received this morning, I perceive you are still in the modern Athens. I wish, when you have determined on coming hitherwards, that you would let me have intimation thereof, as an excursion or two among the mountains, ere summer fades, would be pleasant, if practicable.

“Your sketch of the professor has given us pleasure at Ellera. It has occurred to me that you may possibly allude, in the part which is to follow, to the circumstance of my having lost a great part of my original patrimony, as an antithesis to the word ‘rich.’ Were you to do so, I know it would be with your natural delicacy, and in a way flattering to my character. But the man to whom I owed that favour *died* about a fortnight ago, and any allusion to it might seem to have been prompted by myself, and would excite angry and painful feelings. On that account I trouble you with this perhaps needless hint, that it would be better to pass it over *sub*

silentio. Otherwise, I should have liked some allusion to it, as the loss, grievous to many minds, never hurt essentially the peace of mine, nor embittered my happiness.

“If you think the *Isle of Palms* and the *City of the Plague* original poems (in design), and unborrowed and unsuggested, I hope you will say so. ‘The Plague’ has been often touched on and alluded to, but never, that I know of, was made the subject of a poem, old Withers (the City Remembrancer) excepted, and some drivelling of Taylor the Water Poet. Defoe’s fictitious prose narrative I had never read, except an extract or two in Britton’s *Beauties of England*. If you think me a good private character, do say so; and if in my house there be one who sheds a quiet light, perhaps a beautiful niche may be given to that clear luminary. Base brutes have libelled my personal character. Coming from you, the truth told, without reference to their malignity, will make me and others more happy than any kind expression you may use regarding my genius or talents. In the *Lights and Shadows*, *Margaret Lindsay*, *The Foresters*, and many articles in *Blackwood* (such as Selby’s ‘Ornithology’), I have wished to speak of humble life, and the elementary feelings of the human soul in isolation, under the light of a veil of poetry. Have I done so? Pathos, a sense of the beautiful, and humour, I think I possess. Do I? In the *City of the Plague* there ought to be something of the sublime. Is there? That you think too well of me, is most probably the case. So do not fear to speak whatever you think less flattering; for the opinion of such a man, being formed in kindness and affection, will gratify me far beyond the most boundless panegyric from anybody else. I feel that I am totally free from all jealousy, spite, envy, and uncharitableness. I am not so passionate in temper as you think. In comparison with yourself, I am the Prince of Peacefulness, for you are a nature of dreadful passions subdued by reason.

I wish you would praise me as a lecturer on moral philosophy. That would do me good ; and say that I am thoroughly logical and argumentative, for it is true ; not a rhetorician, as fools aver. I think, with practice and opportunities, I would have been an orator. Am I a good critic? We are all well. I have been very ill with rheumatism. God bless you, my dear friend, and believe me ever yours affectionately,

“ J. W.”

On the death of his wife, Wilson's grief was so intense as to give rise to a report that he had gone out of his mind. In reference to this mistake, he thus wrote to a friend :—

“ It pleased God on the 29th of March to visit me with the severest calamity that can befall one of his creatures, in the death of my wife, with whom I had lived in love for twenty-six years, and from that event till about a fortnight ago, I lived with my family, two sons and three daughters, dutiful and affectionate, in a secluded house near Roslin. I am now in Edinburgh, and early in November hope to resume my daily duties in the University. I have many blessings for which I am humbly thankful to the Almighty, and though I have not borne my affliction so well, or better than I have done, yet I have borne it with submission and resignation, and feel that though this world is darkened, I may be able yet to exert such faculties, humble as they are, as God has given me, if not to the benefit, not to the detriment of my fellow-mortals.”

Fifteen years later, Wilson thus wrote of affliction such as he had suffered :—

“ When the hand of death has rent in one moment from fond affection the happiness of years, and seems to have left to it no other lot upon earth than to bleed and mourn, then, in that desolation of the spirit, are discovered what are the secret powers which it bears within itself, out of which it can

derive consolation and peace. The Mind, torn by such a stroke from all those inferior human sympathies which, weak and powerless when compared to its own sorrow, can afford it no relief, turns itself to that sympathy which is without bounds. Ask of the forlorn and widowed heart, What is the calm which it finds in those hours of secret thought, which are withdrawn from all eyes? Ask, What is that hidden process of nature by which grief has led it on to devotion? That attraction of the soul in its uttermost earthly distress to a source of consolation remote from earth, is not to be ascribed to a disposition to substitute one emotion for another, as if it hoped to find relief in dispelling and blotting out the vain passion with which it laboured before ; but, in the very constitution of the soul, the capacities of human and divine affection are linked together, and it is the very depths of its passion that leads it over from the one to the other. Nor is its consolation forgetfulness. But that affection which was wounded becomes even more deep and tender in the midst of the calm which it attains.”*

May we not believe, also, that the desolate and infirm old man found a minor consolation in those pleasures of memory, combined with imagination, which, in the person of Christopher North, he had formerly so highly vaunted as the sufficing solace of old age? We may surely surround the “chair-days” of John Wilson with some such pictures as the following :—

“Yes! all we have to do is to let down their lids—to will what our eyes shall see—and, lo! there it is—a creation ; Day dawns, and for our delight in soft illumination from the dim obscure floats slowly up a visionary loch— island after island evolving itself into settled stateliness above its trembling shadow, till, from the overpowering beauty of the wide confusion of woods and waters, we seek relief, but find none, in

* *Dies Borealis*, August, 1852.

gazing on the sky ; for the east is in all the glory of sunrise, and the heads and the names of the mountains are uncertain among the gorgeous colours of the clouds. Would that we were a painter ! Oh ! how we should dash on the day and interlace it with night ! That chasm should be filled with enduring gloom, thicker and thicker, nor the sun himself suffered to assuage the sullen spirit, now lowering and threatening there, as if portentous of earthquake. Danger and fear should be made to hang together for ever on those cliffs, and halfway up the precipice be fixed the restless cloud ascending from the abyss, so that in imagination you could not choose but hear the cataract. The shadows should seem to be stalking away like evil spirits before angels of light—for at our bidding the splendours should prevail against them, deploying from the gates of heaven beneath the banners of morn. Yet the whole picture should be harmonious as a hymn—as a hymn at once sublime and sweet—serene and solemn—nor should it not be felt as even cheerful—and sometimes as if there were about to be merriment in Nature’s heart—for the multitude of the isles should rejoice, and the new-woke waters look as if they were waiting for the breezes to enliven them into waves, and wearied of rest to be longing for the motion already beginning to nestle by fits along the silvan shores. Perhaps a deer or two—but we have opened a corner of the fringed curtains of our eyes—the idea is gone—and Turner or Thomson must transfer from our paper to his canvass the imperfect outline—for it is no more—and make us a present of the finished picture.

“Strange that with all our love of nature, and of art, we never were a painter. True that in boyhood we were no contemptible hand at a lion or a tiger ; and sketches by us of such cats springing or preparing to spring in keelavine, dashed off some fifty or sixty years ago, might well make Edwin Landseer stare. Even yet we are a sort of Salvator Rosa at a

savage scene, and our black-lead pencil heaps up confused shatterings of rocks, and flings a mountainous region into convulsions, as if an earthquake heaved, *in a way that is no canny*, making people shudder as if something had gone wrong with this planet of ours, and creation were falling back into chaos. But we love scenes of beautiful repose too profoundly ever to dream of 'transferring them to canvass.' Such employment would be felt by us to be desecration—though we look with delight on the work when done by others—the picture without the process—the product of genius without thought of its mortal instruments. We work in words, and words are, in good truth, images, feelings, thoughts ; and of these the outer world, as well as the inner, is composed, let materialists say what they will. Prose is poetry—we have proved *that* to the satisfaction of all mankind. Look ! we beseech you—how a little loch seems to rise up with its tall heronry—a central isle—and all its silvan braes, till it lies almost on a level with the floor of our cave, from which in three minutes we could hobble on our crutch down the inclining greensward to the Bay of Waterlilies, and in that canoe be afloat among the swans. All birches—not any other kind of tree—except a few pines, on whose tops the large nests repose—and here and there a still bird standing as if asleep. What a place for roes !

“The great masters, were their eyes to fall on our idle words, might haply smile—not contemptuously—on our ignorance of art—but graciously on our knowledge of nature. All we have to do, then, is to learn the theory and practice of art—and assuredly we should forthwith set about doing so, had we any reasonable prospect of living long enough to open an exhibition of pictures from our own easel. As it is, we must be contented with that gallery, richer than the Louvre, which our imagination has furnished with masterpieces beyond all price or purchase—many of them touched with her own golden

finger, the rest the work of high but not superior hands. Imagination, who limns in air, has none of those difficulties to contend with that always beset, and often baffle, artists in oils or waters. At a breath she can modify, alter, obliterate, or restore; at a breath she can colour vacuity with rainbow hues—crown the cliff with its castle—swing the drawbridge over the gulf profound—through a night of woods roll the river along on its moonlit reach—by fragmentary cinctures of mist and cloud, so girdle one mountain that it has the power of a hundred—giant rising above giant, far and wide, as if the mighty multitude, in magnificent and triumphant disorder, were indeed scaling heaven. . . .

“We do not deny, excellent youth, that to your eyes and ears beautiful and sublime are the sights and sounds of Nature—and of Art her angel. Enjoy thy pupilage, as we enjoyed ours, and deliver thyself up without dread, or with a holy dread, to the gloom of woods, where night for ever dwells—to the glory of skies, where morn seems enthroned for ever. Coming and going a thousand and a thousand times, yet, in its familiar beauty, ever new as a dream—let thy soul span the heavens with the rainbow. Ask thy heart in the wilderness if that ‘thunder, heard remote,’ be from cloud or cataract; and ere it can reply, it may shudder as the shuddering moor, and your flesh creep upon your bones, as the heather seems to creep on the bent, with the awe of a passing earthquake. Let the sea-mew be thy guide up the glen, if thy delight be in peace profounder than ever sat with her on the lull of summer waves! For the inland loch seems but a vale overflowing with wondrous light—and realities they all look—these trees and pastures, and rocks and hills, and clouds—not softened images, as they are, of realities that are almost stern even in their beauty, and in their sublimity overawing; look at yon precipice that dwindles into pebbles the granite blocks that choke up the shore!

“Now all this, and a million times more than all this, have we too done in our youth, and yet 'tis all nothing to what we do whenever we will it in our age. For almost all *that* is passion; spiritual passion indeed—and as all emotions are akin, they all work with, and into one another's hands, and, however remotely related, recognise and welcome one another, like highland cousins, whenever they meet. Imagination is not the faculty to stand aloof from the rest, but gives the one hand to Fancy and the other to Feeling, and *sets* to Passion, who is often so swallowed up in himself as to seem blind to their *vis-à-vis*, till all at once he hugs all the three, as if he were demented, and as suddenly sporting *dos-à-dos*, is off on a gallopade by himself right slick away on the mountain-tops.

“To the senses of a schoolboy a green sour crab is as a golden pippin, more delicious than any pine apple—the tree which he climbs to pluck it seems to grow in the Garden of Eden—and the parish—moorland though it be—over which he is let loose to play—Paradise. It is barely possible there may be such a substance as matter, but all its qualities worth having are given it by mind. By a necessity of nature, then, we are all poets. We all make the food we feed on; nor is jealousy, the green-eyed monster, the only wretch who discolours and deforms. Every evil thought does so—every good thought gives fresh lustre to the grass—to the flowers—to the stars. And as the faculties of sense, after becoming finer and more fine, do then, because that they are earthly, gradually lose their power, the faculties of the soul, because that they are heavenly, become then more and more and more independent of such ministrations, and continue to deal with images, and with ideas which are diviner than images; nor care for either partial or total eclipse of the daylight, conversant as they are, and familiar with a more resplendent—a spiritual universe.”

CHAPTER XIV.

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF GEORGE CANNING.

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IN 1782 there was a boy, twelve years of age, at school with the Rev. Dr. Richards, to whom his mother addressed the following effusion of the most tender affection :

“ EXETER, *March 10th*, 1782.

“ On Wednesday last I received my sweet boy's *last* proof of an heart unchanged, and breathing that filial duty and affection which does equally honour to *his* heart, and delighted pride, and hopes of future comfort to mine—I feel a sort of impression that it has not reached me as soon as it should have done ; but as my love forgot to *date* it, I cannot ascertain the truth of my conjecture. How shall I find words to convey to thee, my precious child, the gratification of a mother's best expectations ? how tell thee what raptures even thy anxious *wish* to see me can bestow ? Doubt not, my Life, we shall meet ; that Power whose gift alone such filial virtues are ; that God, who gave thee at first to my fond maternal bosom, will one day restore thee to its throbbing wishes, its often repeated prayers !—*When* it will please His divine mercy and wisdom to permit me to be so blest, He only knows ; but I feel a full and perfect confidence in the fact, and wait *His* time with resignation ! Meantime be assured of my daily remembrance, my daily prayers ; and fail not to feed my anxious hopes in thee with frequent repetitions of those sweet feelings towards me which blunt the sharpest arrows of adversity, and rob hard, hard fate of its power to render *entirely* wretched. I have watched for an opportunity of sending to thee some books a long time, and hope a little more will give it me ; I have got a

set of your honoured father's poems, and a Prayer-book with his name written by himself in the first page ; those I mean to send thee, with such others as my judgment shall assist me in choosing, whenever they come in my way. The first moment you can send me your verses, fail not to gratify my pride, and bless my fond expectations ; and upon all such occasions, as they occur, remember that in executing you have *two* points in view—your own fame and the power to bless an ever fond and affectionate mother ! Adieu, my dear child ! the grateful love of my little ones and my heart's fond blessings await thee !

“ M. A. REDDISH.

“ P.S. Direct to me as your last.”

[ENVELOPE.]

“ Master George Canning,

“ at the Rev. Mr. Richards's,

“ Winchester.”

It will be necessary to explain, as briefly as possible, how the lady who bore the name of Reddish was the mother of one who was destined to form so prominent a character in his country's history. His father, George Canning, was the eldest son of a gentleman of landed property at Garvagh, in Ireland. The father and son differed widely in their political opinions, and there were other causes of estrangement between them. In 1757, the young man, having been called to the bar, entered upon a career of improvidence, totally disproportioned to his small paternal allowance. He became a writer without much distinction, and a barrister who never sought professional employment. After eleven years of pleasant social intercourse, which only tended more and more to increase his financial difficulties, his debts became so overwhelming that he had no resource but to unite with his father in cutting off the entail of the family property ; and thus the estate of the elder son was very quickly settled upon his younger brother Paul.

In the year 1768, at a time when he was again heavily encumbered with debt, the briefless barrister married Miss Costello. This young

lady, then eighteen years of age, was residing with her maternal grandfather, Colonel Guidickens, who formerly had held diplomatic appointments in several of the courts of Europe. His son was gentleman usher of the privy chamber in the Queen's household. Poverty, in spite of the high family connections, surrounded this ill-starred pair. They lost an infant daughter, and on the 11th of April, 1770, the mother's heart was gladdened by the birth of a son, who was to be her protector and comforter till the close of her life. The father, broken down by repeated disappointments, died on the 11th of April, 1771, the first anniversary of his son's birth. Upon the widow then devolved the task of maintaining herself and her little boy by the exercise of her talents. She chose the stage as her profession. By the recommendation of the queen she was engaged by Garrick. At that time there were two great actresses upon the London boards, Mrs. Abingdon and Mrs. Barry, with whom an inexperienced girl, however beautiful and accomplished, could not contest for the prize of popularity. Discouraged in London, Mrs. Canning became a provincial actress. In 1775 she was playing at Bristol under the management of Mr. Reddish, of Drury Lane, who had obtained a share in the Bristol Theatre. Her next great misfortune was to marry this man, whose profligate habits rendered him wholly unworthy of such a partner in his labours. It is doubtful whether she ever appeared again in the metropolis, although she attained a considerable celebrity in the provinces. There can be little doubt that when she wrote to her dear son George Canning, in 1782, from Exeter, she was pursuing her laborious career in that city.

It will now be necessary to explain a few particulars with reference to the present publication of the correspondence of George Canning, formerly unpublished, and of which no trace is to be found in the excellent biography of Mr. Robert Bell, nor in the volume of 'George Canning and his Times,' by Augustus Granville Stapleton. The present editor is indebted for the knowledge of these interesting documents to the kindness of the Rev. J. J. Raven, Master of the Grammar School of Great Yarmouth, and he cannot do better, in explanation, than transcribe a passage from Mr. Raven's letter to him of the 19th of February last:—"The bundle of correspondence which either has been or will shortly be placed in your hands requires a few words of explanation from me. The recipient of these letters was my mother's uncle, Henry John Richman, B.C.L. of C.C.C. Oxford, who was for years

Master of the Grammar School at Dorchester, and died rector of the parishes of St. Peter and the Holy Trinity in that town in the year 1824. At his death these papers passed into the hands of his nephew, the late Mr. John Richman, of Adelaide, whose daughter (my first cousin) Mrs. Hughes showed me the correspondence this Christmas. I felt that it was desirable to have the judgment of some gentleman of experience as to publishing it."

The earliest letters of this series written by George Canning previous to his leaving Eton College for Christ Church had a peculiar interest for me, which may be best understood in an extract from my '*Passages of a Working Life*':—

"I possess an interesting document, being the receipt to Charles Knight for fifty guineas 'in full for the copyright of "*The Microcosm*," a periodical carried on by us, the undermentioned persons, under the name and title of Gregory Griffin. Received for John Smith, Robert Smith, John Frere, and self, George Canning.' Of this schoolboys' production, remarkable for its intrinsic merits, but more so for the subsequent eminence of its writers, Canning was the working editor. He was thus brought into friendly communication with my father. It was not only when the brilliant supporter of Pitt was rising into political importance, but when he had taken his place among the foremost men of his time, that he had a kindly feeling towards his first publisher, often calling upon him with a cordial greeting when he visited Windsor."

Before transcribing this correspondence with Mr. Richman, I must avail myself of further information communicated by Mr. Raven:—"The intimacy between him and Canning appears to have sprung up while the latter was at Hyde Abbey School, under the Rev. Dr. Richards—I cannot find that Mr. Richman was ever a Master at Hyde Abbey School; but it seems from his correspondence with Dr. Huntingford that during Canning's school days he was resident at Wykeham (now Wyke or Week, I suppose), near Winchester. As he was a man of great learning and considerable power of teaching it appears to me most probable that Dr. Richards occasionally availed himself of the scholarship of Mr. Richman for the instruction of his higher forms—I know of no other way of accounting for the acquaintance." It may be well to state that Hyde is a suburb of Winchester, and that the school of Dr. Richards was known as that of Hyde Abbey, which is stated to have been founded by King Alfred.

“MY DEAR SIR,—After having kept so long a silence, I scarce know how to begin to address you again, as I fear you must be and are justly offended with me ; but do not, I beg of you, ascribe my silence to any want of affection and gratitude to you, which, believe me, my dearest sir, I do and ever shall entertain for you in the highest degree. To what then, you will say, can it be ascribed but indolence? Not to that only indeed, that *that* must have been the primary cause, I cannot deny ; but when once I had delayed writing to you for a month a sort of shame withheld me, and the sense of my fault kept me from making the only reparation for it. Many times have I resolved to write, and as often, by recollecting how long I had neglected it, I was deterred and knew not how to set about it. I am now resolved to write to beg your forgiveness for my past remissness, and most faithfully to assure you I will in future be regular and punctual in my correspondence : that I may not, however, turn my whole letter into an apology I will change the subject and speak to you as if my pardon were already sealed. I am now, my dear sir, at the top of Eton School—I am the first of the Oppidants* (Commoners you call them)—I was to have been put on the foundation ; but I did so much dislike the idea, and so evidently saw the great difference of behaviour and respect paid to the one situation in preference to the other, that I prevailed on my uncle (being aided by the advice of Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan, who gave their opinions in my favour) to give up the idea. Hear some of my reasons, and judge. A Colleger stays at Eton till nineteen ; then, if a vacancy falls out at King’s College, Cambridge, while he is first in the school, he is translated thither, and enjoys an advantage of upon an average from first to last of about 50*l.* per annum till he dies or marries. When a man

* In this letter Mr. Canning thrice writes *Oppidant*, the present term being *Oppidan*.

goes into the Church the advantage is greater, as he may chance by very good luck to get a living. These are the advantages. The contrary is—a Collegier rises much slower in the school, and is consequently much later at the top. He stays till nineteen—an Oppidant till seventeen : two years, or a year even, to a man whose line is the bar, is surely an object. A Collegier may, after all, not go to King's if a vacancy does not fall—where *then* is the advantage?—a Collegier, among the boys even, is not looked upon in near so respectable a light as an Oppidant. This was one of my principal reasons for my dislike—I gained my point, and have been some time in the sixth (the head) form. We have many speeches here—I have spoken—Cicero in Catalinam—Video P.C. in me omnium ora atque oculos, &c.—a very fine part in my opinion—Darius ad exercitum—beginning Terrarum quas Oceanus hinc alluit, &c.—Quint. Curt.—in which there are some very *oratorical* parts : I mean (though my expression does not, I believe, convey my meaning) parts very pleasant to speak as being very fine turns, &c. ; and at election—the time when the greatest exhibition is, and when there is a vast deal of company—I spoke Satàn to the Sun. Shall I own to you, my dear sir, I have not, I fear, been for this last twelve months or more so diligent as I might have been. I have not employed my leisure time to the best advantage ; but I have another year before me ere I leave Eton—I will apply myself diligently to the study of the classics—the Greek as well as Latin. Do not think this a foolish resolution of a moment ; I see the necessity of it, if I mean ever to be master of the classics, which I thoroughly purpose. Write to me, my dearest sir, and give me a list of those which you wish me more immediately to study—chalk out a line of study—believe me I will diligently pursue it. You see, sir, I make bold to ask of you as of a friend. Such I have ever found you, my dear sir ; and for your many kindnesses

shown to me, believe me, I entertain the greatest gratitude, and am most affectionately and gratefully yours,

"G. CANNING.

"ETON, *Sept.* 27, 1786."

"My direction is at Mr. Hannington's.

"I have, since I have been in the sixth form, had the following exercises particularly taken notice of and sent up for the perusal of the Provost and Fellows—as it is customary for some præpostor's exercise to go up for a holyday every week when there is one to be asked for.

"One Hexameter—On the peculiar Providence of God. One Hex. and Pent. Didactic on Electioneering Bribery. One Hexameter—Satire on Modern Conversation; and one Alcaic on *Fortunæ Vicet*—which I shall take the liberty of sending to you for your inspection."

"MY DEAR SIR,—I am very much obliged to you, as well for your early attention to my letter, as for the kindness with which you receive my apology for a negligence I had almost feared unpardonable: be assured that it shall be the last omission I will ever have to accuse myself of with regard to you. With regard to my going into College, I think I see all the arguments you meant to urge to me on that head—the force of them I see, but no advantage that could accrue from it would to me counterbalance the sorrow it would have given me, and the insurmountable dislike I had to the foundation. This you will call, no doubt, a groundless and unjustifiable prejudice. Be it founded on what grounds it will, I am convinced it was so rooted in my mind as not to be conquered, however unavoidable necessity might have repressed it, if I had gone on the foundation. I am, however, very happy that it is far far too late now to think anything about it; and I could not now go into College if I would, as to neglect and act contrary to any advice that came from

you would be to me extremely disagreeable. This task will not now be mine. Jolliffe I knew but little at Eton—I mean merely as a casual acquaintance : of those qualities, therefore, which you say he possesses, I can form no judgment. You do not mention to me what I have by chance heard from Mr. Kirby (who has been here to get subscribers for a couple of prints of his—did you see them? they are from drawings of his own of the ‘Deserted Village,’ and, as far as my judgment goes, extremely pretty), namely, that you have taken some pupils to live with you and be educated by you, and are going to *settle*. I hope the intelligence is well founded; for if any one is qualified for the task of instruction, do not think I flatter when I say it is yourself; and to you, my dear Sir, what obligations I owe for the pains you have bestowed upon me, I shall ever be proud to acknowledge, and call myself

“Most sincerely and affectionately yours,

“G. CANNING.”

“ETON, Oct. 24, '86.

“Will you call me tasteless if I own I think the ‘*Ἰκέρυδες*’ but dull and uninteresting?—but the ‘*ΜΗΔΕΙΑ*’ glorious. I am now reading ‘Demosthenes.’ Pray let me hear when you have leisure.”

“LONDON, Sept. sixth, 1787.

“MY DEAR SIR,—There has been so long a cessation of correspondence between us, that I believe it would be vain to endeavour to look back on the last letters that have past from one of us to the other. It gave me very sincere pleasure to see your handwriting again, so unexpectedly in a letter of Hare’s—as I had been for a long time in a state of very disagreeable uncertainty about your present situation and place of abode; in short, about everything concerning you.

“That I have now taken my farewell of Eton, you are, I suppose, already informed by Hare ; as also probably that my destination is Christ Church College, Oxford, whither I am to go in October next, and (by the particular advice of Lord Macartney) as a Gent. Commoner.* My intimacy with Lord M. arises from a very close friendship which subsisted between him and my father, many years ago, when they were fellow-students both at Dublin College and at the Middle Temple. On his return from India he expressed a desire to see me, and has ever since taken so warm an interest in all my concerns, as cannot but be very flattering to me, and has determined me in every point, that I can, to follow his advice. I do not think that a line has passed between you and me, my dear Sir, since the death of my grandmother, which happened in November last at Bath, whither she had removed in vain from Dublin to try the efficacy of its waters. By her death I came into possession of the fortune left me by my grandfather, about 400*l.* per annum. With this I shall, I thank God, be amply enabled to prosecute my studies, both academical and professional, as a gentleman ; and in short to answer every wish, except one, that of providing for my poor mother ; but even this will, I trust, be in my power some years hence. Meantime, to lift her some little way above actual want and to alleviate in some measure the hardships of her situation, I obtained the consent of my uncle, and since his death, of my guardian, to allow fifty pounds a year. The death of my uncle (under whose guardianship I was)—an event to me as unexpected as it was melancholy—took place in May last. I was at Brighton with my poor aunt and her children, when I received your postscript. She is indeed, all things considered, I think, pretty well. She has a strong sense of religion ; a resource from which she draws every

* In a subsequent letter Mr. Canning states that, by his guardian's advice, he was not to be entered a *Gentleman* Commoner.

consolation her unfortunate condition is capable of. The care of her rising family occupied almost the whole of her attention ; and they are all, I trust in God, in a fair way amply to fulfil her warmest wishes for their future welfare and prosperity. But I find I have run out my paper before I was aware of it. I must defer till another post what more I have to say to you ; and hasten to conclude with desiring my respects to Mrs. Richman, and assuring you, that I am, my dear Sir,

“ Ever most sincerely yours,

“ G. C.”

“ LONDON, *Sept. 13th, 1787.*

“ MY DEAR SIR,—In my last letter to you I doubt whether I mentioned any direction by which an answer to it would reach me. Most probably I shall leave town before any letter from Poole can come after your receipt of this ; but as it will at any rate follow me, you will be so good as to direct me at *W. Borrowes's Esq., Clement's Lane, London.* Mr. Borrowes was in partnership with my uncle ; and still carries on the business for the benefit of his family. He is now my guardian ; and since the melancholy event of my uncle's death, has behaved, with respect to his family, in a manner the most generous and affectionate. Mr. Sheridan, too, has proved himself, both to the family and to myself in particular, a most kind friend. His advice and assistance will, doubtless, be to me of every advantage, and will be always open to me. I need not tell you, my dear Sir, that the law is my road ; and that I look forward to it with all eagerness and expectation ; and perhaps, at some future day, to the House of Commons,—a field, open indeed, not so much for *solid pudding* as empty praise. Besides logic and mathematics, is there anything else the acquisition of which is to be sought at the University ? Civil law ? Do not think I mean to forget the classics. Greek

especially will consume much of my attention. You will, perhaps, think these all empty professions; but I will seriously combat all inclinations to idleness, and exert myself earnestly to do everything I ought to do. After the University, do not you think a year abroad in France and Italy would be serviceable, to learn the languages and to see Rome—which who does not wish to see and contemplate?

“I have given you just a rough sketch; and I hope to have it sanctioned with your approbation. Now I must, with fear and trembling, ask you—Have you seen and read the ‘Microcosm’? I intend sending one to you, whenever I can find any opportunity of so doing. I long much to hear your opinion, and deprecate the severity of criticism. To publish was indeed a bold attempt. We succeed, however, far beyond our expectations. I lament much that it will not be in my power to accept your very kind invitation for Christmas. About that time I probably shall go over to Ireland; but whenever an opportunity offers of seeing you, I shall seize it immediately with the greatest pleasure. Pray let me hear from you as soon as you can write with any convenience; and believe me, my dear Sir, to be

“Most sincerely, ever yours,

“G. C.”

The secession of Mr. Canning from the Whig party to which he was considered to belong, chiefly on account of early friendships, has been too commonly attributed to a prudential estimate of the course that was best fitted for his own advancement. The following letter belongs to English history, and needs no comment on the part of the editor of this volume.

“ASHBORNE, *Thursday, Aug. 8, 1793.*

“MY DEAR SIR,—It is so long since any communication has passed between us, that you will perhaps be surprised at the sight of my handwriting; and I should certainly find some

difficulty in selecting topics on which to write to you, were I not determined to make myself, and my own concerns, the principal subjects of my letter.

“Before I proceed to these subjects, indeed, I have to apologise to you for my having omitted to return any other than a verbal answer to a letter which I received from you by the hands of Mr. Gould. I had left Christ Church—or, at least, having taken my Bachelor’s degree, had ceased to be a constant resident there—some time before you wrote that letter. And I did not receive it, therefore, till I happened accidentally to pass a few weeks at Oxford, near four months after it had been written. My acquaintance among the younger part of the inhabitants of Christ Church is so small, that any introduction of mine could have carried Mr. Gould but a very little way: and had it been otherwise, it would *then* have been too late for me to attempt it, when he was so good as to deliver me your letter; since, by a residence of three months at Christ Church, he had already become established in a much more extensive acquaintance than any efforts of mine could have procured him; an acquaintance too, including, I believe, almost every body whom I knew, and to whom I could have made him known. This indeed, you will, I hope, already have understood from himself—and in that hope it is, that I have hitherto omitted to explain it to you by letter.

“To come now to the matter which has more particularly induced me to trouble you—you will probably have seen by the newspapers that I am come into Parliament: and I dare flatter myself that you will not have seen it, without some solicitude to know the manner, the views, and the principles, which mark my entrance into public life. I have collected, as I think, enough of your political sentiments from your former letters, to feel pretty much assured of your hearing with some degree of satisfaction that I owe my seat to the friendship of

Mr. Pitt ; and that my public feelings and opinions go to the support of the present Administration.

“ I shall not think it extraordinary if you are somewhat surprised at this declaration : because I do not think it improbable that you may, in common with very many persons, have conceived that my acquaintance with some of the principal characters of Opposition was something more than a mere personal familiarity, and amounted in fact to political attachment and obligation. In answer to this supposition, if you should have entertained it, I have only to say, ‘ upon the word of an honest man, the fact is otherwise.’ With different individuals, indeed, of Opposition I have been much in habits of intimacy—with Mr. Sheridan, particularly, my friendship is from my childhood, and as with a family friend—and that friendship will, I trust, be uninterrupted by politics. I am sure it shall not be my fault if it be otherwise. But neither to him nor to any person else, have I ever considered myself, nor have they considered me, as tied and bound by the smallest obligation, personal or political, that should govern my public sentiments, or fetter my free choice of my party. I have always felt, and have now asserted myself, as perfectly at liberty to think, choose, and act for myself ; and that thought, choice, and action has been directed according to my own judgment and my own conscience.

“ What may have been the considerations that have induced me to choose the party which I have chosen, I will cheerfully detail to you hereafter. Probably they are nearly the same with those which have, at this time, made up the minds of most thinking men in the kingdom. But with respect to the *prudence* of my conduct, I do not wish at present to trouble you. We shall have many opportunities—I wish I could say by meeting, but at all events by writing—to discuss such secondary topics. All that I wish to show to you, at this first discussion,

is that my conduct has been strictly *honourable*. And in that I trust I shall have succeeded.

“ The place for which I am returned is Newtown in the Isle of Wight. The seat comes to me, as I said before, from Mr. Pitt; and, as I believe I did not before add, from *him solely*, and *immediately to me*, without the influence, or interference, of any other man, or set of men whatever. And, which is no immaterial consideration to a person so far from rich as myself, it comes without a farthing of expense.

“ Thus much, my dear Sir, for politics. I am ashamed to have written so much about myself; but I could not but remember how kindly and anxiously you have interested yourself about me formerly; and I could not but presume to conclude that you would not interest yourself with less kindness, or less anxiety, about the most important event which has ever yet happened to me; and that I should therefore, but ill express my sense of your goodness, if I were not, even at the risk of exhibiting a good deal of egotism, to give you every information concerning that event, and its causes. In return for this, I beg to hear from you soon; and to hear not only how far you approve of what I have done, but (which will interest me no less), what you are yourself doing, and with what success—and, in short, all ‘your fates and fortunes; of which for some time past, by the fault of neither of us perhaps, I have been uncomfortably ignorant.

“ In the covers which accompany this, I send you two copies of verses of mine, which were spoken at the Episcenia at Oxford: the longer one by Mr. Dawkins, with whose name, if not with himself, you are probably acquainted, as his family live in that part of Wiltshire which borders on your country; and the shorter one by Lord John Beresford.

“ I am very happy to have an opportunity, precisely at this time, of showing to the Duke of Portland that no difference of

political opinion could impair my veneration for his private character, or my respect for his public integrity. For to *him* I *had* some obligation ; obligation, not indeed for favours *received* from him, but for a favour offered though not accepted. About four months ago, *he* did me the honour to offer me a seat in Parliament. I, of course, declined it ; but in declining it, expressed, as in truth I did most sincerely feel, that to *him personally* and individually considered, I should deem it a high and proud distinction to have been obliged for an opportunity of coming into public life—but that individually it was impossible to consider him—and that I was equally ready to own that the conduct of many persons with whom he was connected was such as I could not approve, and such therefore as I would not willingly be placed in a situation to defend,—that I could not on these grounds, but decline his offer, though feeling most sensibly the honour which he had done me by making it—and finally that, were I in Parliament, I should most certainly look upon it as my duty, a duty which for some time past had been growing every day more pressing and decisive, to give my support to the present Administration.

“It was about the time of the *Epicenia* that my accepting a seat from Mr. Pitt *proved* the *latter* part of what I had said to the D. of P——. It was an infinite satisfaction to me to be able at the *same* time to demonstrate to him that I was no less sincere in what I had said to him of *himself*.

“But I am getting upon my own subjects again, without reflecting that I have already filled two sheets with a detail so long that if you have the patience to read it all, and the kindness to read it with pleasure, it will add no inconsiderable proof to the many which I have heretofore received of your friendship—One other proof I have to ask, which is that you will write to me soon.

"My address is *Ashborne Hall, Derbyshire*; where I am settled, at the house of an uncle of mine for the summer.

"I am, my dear Sir,

"Ever most affectionately yours,

"GEO. CANNING."

The intimacy of Mr. Canning with his early friend and instructor seems to have sustained no diminution from the promptings of ambition or the labours of official life. Mr. Richman appears to have sent the busy statesman a long manuscript poem, which, I presume, was never published in a separate form; for I can find no trace of Mr. Richman's name as an author, in any of the literary records of that period. The critical remarks of Mr. Canning may be scarcely intelligible without reference to the poem itself. But they evince not only the kindness of his nature, but show that the lively satirist of the 'Anti-Jacobin' was not wholly engrossed by party warfare.

"SPRING GARDENS, *June 3, 1799.*

"MY DEAR SIR,—I at length return you your poem, with many thanks for the length of time during which you have allowed me to keep possession of it, and with more for the pleasure which I have derived from the perusal and re-perusal of it.

"I will not enter into a minute critical disquisition upon any particular points, but content myself with stating that the whole scope and design of the poem appear to me eminently good, and that there are passages in it strikingly beautiful. The question of publication, therefore, rests not upon the merit of the thing to be received, but upon the capacity and disposition of the public to receive. And thereupon I have my doubts. It is an age of calculators and politicians, and I am afraid not very favourable to the success of a work which speaks to higher passions and purer taste than belong to those considerations. However, your bookseller will be as good a judge as either you or I could be. The success of the 'Pur-

suits of Literature' might perhaps seem to contradict the charge of insensibility to poetical merit if there were not reason to believe that the strong seasoning of personality in the notes to that poem is perhaps that which has recommended it most powerfully to the taste of the generality of readers.

"Supposing, however, no considerations of this sort to impede the publication, the first remark that strikes me is that there will be wanting some little introduction to convey to the reader the general plan and intention of the whole poem; and perhaps a sort of running commentary (as brief as you will) to point out the relation and coherence of the several parts, so far as they are finished. In the next place, I certainly do agree with you in thinking that it might be shortened, though I am far from being sure that I should consent to losing that part which you propose to leave out, the latter part of the introduction. I am rather for curtailing that part which I have so liberally scored with pencil on the margin, the appeal to Priestly, and the reflections upon the earlier stages of the French Revolution. Priestly is exploded and forgotten; and the events which have followed each other so rapidly within the last four or five years have effaced all recollection of that period of the Revolution when the good or pernicious tendency of the principles of the first Conventionalists was matter of dispute in this country. At the same time I would not give up the defence of religion, nor the rebukes of atheistical doctrines; but I think the rebuke might be contained in half-a dozen lines, and that you may *assume* all the points that you now *argue*, to ground the contrast upon them. Priestly, I think, I would omit altogether, and address the rebuke to the new philosophers in a mass.

"What other little suggestions have occurred to me you will find noted in pencil marks (which you will rub out when you have run them over), but you will not find them many, nor

very material. It is only necessary for me to apprize you that the mark † is used when the criticism relates to the sense or collocation of a word or phrase ; / when to the metre or flow of the verse ; § when I think there is any obscurity or want of arrangement in a whole passage ; and that q. is subjoined either when I venture to point out an easy alteration, or am inclined to think, but not quite certain, that any alteration would be for the better.

“ In one or two instances only I have ventured to scratch out (to show that I am *quite* of opinion that they would be better omitted) one or two lines together.

“ The doubling down of the leaf expresses that the page contains something which I think eminently beautiful.

“ I do not know whether you will admit the justice of all my remarks. I hope only you will not think that I have used the liberty which you gave me too largely.

“ Believe me, my dear Sir,

“ Most sincerely yours,

“ GEORGE CANNING.”

I conclude this series of unpublished letters with one written by Mr. Canning to his early friend at a period of great domestic affliction.

“ LONDON, *April* 26, 1820.

“ MY DEAR SIR,—I am much indebted to you for your kind letter ; and I beg you to believe that, although I had never for a moment attributed your silence to remissness, I was nevertheless truly pleased to see your handwriting again.

“ I am sorry that you have had so much uneasiness on account of Mrs. Richman’s health, but I trust that the arrival, late as it is, of mild weather will tend to complete what may be wanting to her recovery.

“ My wife and family are abroad. I left them at Rome

when I was summoned home for the Session of Parliament in November last; and I look forward impatiently to the conclusion of the present Session, that I may go to meet and bring them back. My wife's absence during the last month has providentially spared her a long suffering, though she will have been the less prepared for the blow. My poor boy had for years been in a state which rendered the restoration of health and the enjoyment of life quite hopeless; and he was, God be thanked! in mind, and in morals, as fully prepared for the change which he has undergone as ever was human being!

"I feel very kindly your expressions of condolence.

"I enclose, according to your request, a copy of the Liverpool publication of my Speeches at the last Election, and a copy of the last Speech separately, not indeed by myself, but with my concurrence.

"Believe me, my dear Sir,

"Always sincerely yours,

"GEO. CANNING."

My readers may desire to know something of the later history of the reverend friend who held so high a place in the esteem of one of the most interesting of England's public men.

The Reverend H. J. Richman, was for years Master of the Grammar School at Dorchester, and died Rector of St. Peter's and Trinity in that town. His decease took place on Nov. 23rd, 1824, from the effect of an accident more than commonly tragical. He and his wife were sleeping in their old rectory, when, during a violent gale of wind, a massive chimney fell and killed them both. A county paper thus records the afflicting circumstances of this calamity:—"Died, on Tuesday last, the Rev. H. J. Richman, Rector of the parish of the Holy Trinity in this town, and Mrs. Richman, his wife. Their deaths were awfully sudden, occasioned by the falling of part of the roof of their house, during the dreadful tempest. A few minutes before six o'clock a tremendous crash was heard. The inmates immediately hastened to the bed-room of Mr. and Mrs. Richman, but could not

open the door. A medical gentleman (Dr. Cooper) residing in the same street, was instantly called, and on his entering, with other persons, the bed-room, they observed a mass of stones and rubbish on the bed, on the removal of which the awful spectacle of two lifeless bodies presented itself: the venerable rector and his amiable wife had both been suffocated. No mark of violence appeared on either of them, with the exception of a slight scar on the forehead of Mrs. Richman. Dr. Cooper was of opinion that their death was instantaneous."

CHAPTER XV.
DETACHED LETTERS OF VARIOUS
WRITERS.

1. BISHOP HEBER.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF INDIA.

VISIT TO A BRAHMIN.

2. BEETHOVEN ON HIS DEAFNESS.

3. WILLIAM PITT, EARL OF CHATHAM, TO HIS NEPHEW.

4. DR. PARR ON THE BOYHOOD OF SHERIDAN.

5. LORD COLLINGWOOD TO LADY COLLINGWOOD.

CHAPTER XV.

BISHOP HEBER ON INDIA.

THE Rev. Reginald Heber, who was appointed Bishop of Calcutta in 1823, has left us the most interesting memorials of his labours in his Indian diocese. A scholar of a very high order, a poet of no common pretensions, a most devout and assiduous parish-priest, he carried to his high office a thorough sense of his responsibilities, without any superabundant zeal to force on the conversion of the natives beyond the bounds of prudence and moderation. We select two of his letters on Indian subjects, addressed by him to his friend Charles Williams Wynn, President of the Board of Control, who pressed upon him the acceptance of the colonial bishopric as a sphere of usefulness requiring such rare qualities as Reginald Heber possessed. Had he remained at home, his ambition would certainly have been gratified by the offer of some one of the highest offices of the English Church. But he saw in his Indian mission a course of action which, while it satisfied the fervour of his imagination, presented to him a sphere of the loftiest duty that an earnest piety, under the control of a clear intellect, could offer to a minister of the Gospel, in times not without their dangers and difficulties. He died somewhat suddenly at Trichinopoly on the 3rd of April, 1826. In about three weeks he would have completed the forty-third year of his age.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF INDIA.

BISHOP HEBER TO HON. C. W. W. WYNN.

“BARRACKPOOR, Oct. 29th, 1823.

“MY DEAR WYNN,—The first quiet morning which I have had since my arrival in India I cannot employ more agreeably than in writing to those dear and kind friends, the recollection

of whom I feel binding me still more strongly to England the farther I am removed from it.

“The first sight of India has little which can please even those who have been three months at sea. The coast is so flat as only to be distinguished when very near it by the tall cocoa-trees which surround the villages ; and Juggernaut, which is a conspicuous sea-mark, shows merely three dingy conical domes, like glass-houses. The view of Saugor is still worse, being made up of marshes and thick brushwood on the same level line of shore, and conveying at once the idea, which it well deserves, of tigers, serpents, and fevers. During the night of our anchoring under its lee, however, few of us went to bed without reluctance ; since, besides the interest which men feel in looking at land at all after so long an absence, I never saw such magnificent sheet lightning in my life as played over it all night. When coupled with the unhealthy and dangerous character of the place, and the superstitions connected with it as the favourite abode of Rali, it was impossible to watch the broad, red, ominous light which flickered without more intermission than just served to heighten its contrast with darkness, and not to think of Southey’s Padalon ; and it luckily happened that ‘Kehama’ was on board, and that many of the party, at my recommendation, had become familiar with it during the voyage. By the way, what a vast deal of foolish prejudice exists about Southey and his writings. Of the party on board, some had been taught to think him a Jacobin, some an ultra-Tory, some a Methodist, some an enemy to all religion, and some a madman. None had read a line of his works, but all were inclined to criticise him ; and yet all, when they really tried the formidable volume, were delighted both with the man and the poetry. Nor is he the only poet for whom I succeeded in obtaining some justice. I repeated, at different times, some parts of the ‘Ancient Mariner,’ without telling

whose it was, and had the pleasure to find that its descriptions of nature in tropical countries were recognized by the officers and more experienced passengers as extremely vivid, and scarcely exaggerated. The chief mate, a very hard-headed Scotchman, a grandson of Lord Monboddo's, was peculiarly struck and downright affected with the shrinking of the planks of the devoted ship when becalmed under the line, the stagnation and rolling of the deep, and the diminished size and terrible splendour of the noon-day sun right over the mast-head, 'in a hot and copper sky.' He foretold that we should see something like this when the 'Grenville' came to anchor in the Hooghly; and verily he fabled not. The day after our arrival off Saugor the sun was, indeed, a thing of terror, and almost intolerable; and the torrent, carrying down trees, sugar-canes, and corpses past us every five minutes, and boiling as it met the tide-stream like milled chocolate, with its low banks of jungle or of bare sand, was as little promising to a new-comer as could well be conceived. Of these different objects, the corpses, as you are aware, are a part of the filthy superstition of the country, which throws the dead, half-roasted over a scanty fire, into the sacred river; and such objects must always be expected and perceived by more senses than one. The others, though also usual at the termination of the rains, were this year particularly abundant, from the great height to which the river had risen, and the consequent desolation which it had brought on the lower plantations and villages.

"We arrived in Fort William on the evening of the 10th. The impression made by the appearance of the European houses which we passed in Gardenreach, by our own apartments, by the crowd of servants, the style of carriages and horses sent to meet us, and almost all the other circumstances which meet our eyes, was that of the extreme similarity of everything to Russia; making allowance only for the black

instead of the white faces, and the difference of climate, though even in Russia, during summer, it is necessary to guard against intense heat. This impression was afterwards rather confirmed than weakened. The size of the houses, their whiteness and Palladian porticos, the loftiness of the rooms, and the scanty furniture, the unbounded hospitality and apparent love of display, all reminded me of Petersburg and Moscow; to which the manner in which the European houses are scattered, with few regular streets, but each with its separate courtyard and gateway, and often intermixed with miserable huts, still more contributed. I caught myself several times mixing Russian with my newly-acquired Hindoostanee, talking of rubles instead of rupees, and bidding the attendants come and go in what they of course mistook for English, but which was Sclavonic. I was surprised to find how little English is understood by them; out of upwards of forty servants, there are only two who have the least smattering of it, and they know a few of the commonest words, without the power of putting together or understanding a sentence. The Sircar, indeed, is a well-educated man, but of him we see comparatively little, so that we have abundant opportunity and necessity for the acquisition of the native languages. After a manner, indeed, everybody speaks them, but we find (I must say) our previous instructions in grammar from Gilchrist extremely valuable, both as facilitating our progress and as guarding us from many ridiculous equivoques and blunders into which other griffins fall. . . . My situation here is extremely pleasant—as pleasant as it can be at a distance from such friends as those whom I have left behind; and I have a field of usefulness before me so vast, that my only fear is lest I should lose my way in it. The attention and the kindness of the different members of government, and the hospitality of the society of Calcutta, have been everything we could wish, and more. The arrears of business which I

have to go through, though great, and some of a vexatious nature, are such as I see my way through. My own health, and those of my wife and child, have rather improved than otherwise since our landing ; and the climate, now that we have lofty rooms, and means of taking exercise at proper times of the day, is anything but intolerable. . . . Of what are called in England 'the luxuries of the East,' I cannot give a very exalted description ; all the fruits now in season are inferior to those of England. The oranges, though pleasant, are small and acid ; the plantain is but an indifferent mellow pear ; the shaddock has no merit but juiciness and a slight bitter taste, which is reckoned good in fevers ; and the guava is an almost equal mixture of raspberry jam and garlic. Nor are our artificial luxuries more remarkable than our natural. They are, in fact, only inventions (judicious and elegant certainly) to get rid of real and severe inconveniences ; while all those circumstances in which an Englishman mainly places his ideas of comfort or splendour, such as horses, carriages, glass, furniture, etc., are, in Calcutta, generally paltry and extravagantly dear. In fact, as my shipmate, Colonel Pennington, truly told me, 'the real luxuries of India, when we can get them, are cold water and cold air.' But though the luxury and splendour are less, the society is better than I expected. The state in which the high officers of government appear, and the sort of deference paid to them in society are great, and said to be necessary in conformity with native ideas, and the example set by the first conquerors, who took their tone from the Mussulmans whom they supplanted. All members of council, and others, down to the rank of puisne judges inclusive, are preceded by two men with silver sticks, and two others with heavy silver maces ; and they have in society some queer regulations, which forbid any person to quit a party before the lady or gentleman of most rank rises to take leave. . . .

“There are some circumstances in Calcutta dwellings which at first surprise and annoy a stranger. The lofty rooms swarm with cockroaches and insects; sparrows and other birds fly in and out all day, and, as soon as the candles are lighted, large bats flutter on their indented wings, like Horace's *cura*, round our *laqueata tecta*, if this name could be applied to roofs without any ceiling at all, where the beams are left naked and visible, lest the depredations of the white ant should not be seen in time. . . .

“On the whole, however, you will judge from my description that I have abundant reason to be satisfied with my present comforts and my future prospects, and that in the field which seems open to me for extensive usefulness and active employment, I have more and more reason to be obliged to the friends who have placed me here.

“The country round Calcutta is a perfect flat, intersected by pools and canals, natural and artificial, teeming with population like an ant-hill, and covered with one vast shade of fruit-trees, not of low growth, like those of England, but, generally speaking, very lofty and majestic. To me it has great interest; indeed, such a scene as I have described, with the addition of a majestic river, may be monotonous, but cannot be ugly.

“Barrackpoor, the governor's country house, is really a beautiful place, and would be thought so in any country. It has what is here unexampled—a park of about 150 acres of fine turf, with spreading scattered trees, of a character so European that, if I had not been on an elephant, and had not from time to time seen tall cocoa-trees towering above all the rest, I could have fancied myself on the banks of the Thames instead of the Ganges. It is hence that I date my letter, having been asked to pass two days here. Our invitation was for a considerably longer period, but it is as yet with difficulty that I can get away even for a few hours from Calcutta. . . .

“Of the religious state of India I have little as yet to say. I have bestowed the archdeaconry, much to my satisfaction, on the senior resident chaplain, Mr. Corrie, who is extremely popular in the place, and one of the most amiable and gentlemanly men in manners and temper I ever met with.

“In the schools which have been lately established in this part of the empire, of which there are at present nine established by the Church Missionary, and eleven by the Christian Knowledge Societies, some very unexpected facts have occurred. As all direct attempts to convert the children are disclaimed, the parents send them without scruple. But it is no less strange than true that there is no objection made to the use of the Old and New Testaments as a class-book ; that so long as the teachers do not urge them to eat what will make them lose their caste, or to be baptized, or to curse their country’s gods, they readily consent to everything else, and not only Mussulmans, but Brahmins, stand by with perfect coolness, and listen sometimes with apparent interest and pleasure, while the scholars by the roadside are reading the stories of the creation and of Jesus Christ. Whether the children themselves may imbibe Christianity by such means, or whether they may suffer these truths to pass from their minds as we allow the mythology which we learn at school to pass from ours, some further time is yet required to show ; but this, at least, I understand has been ascertained, that a more favourable opinion, both of us and our religion, has been, apparently, felt of late by many of those who have thus been made acquainted with its leading truths, and that some have been heard to say that they did not know till now that the English had ‘a caste or a shaster.’ You may imagine with what feelings I have entered the huts where these schools are held, on seeing a hundred poor little children seated on the ground, writing their letters in sand, or their copies on banana-leaves, coming

out one after another to read the history of the good Samaritan, or of Joseph, proud of showing their knowledge, and many of them able to give a very good account of their studies.

“I have been even much gratified at seeing the confidence and respect evidently shown by the elder villagers toward the clergy who superintend these schools. I yesterday saw a man follow a German missionary to request that he would look at his little boy's copy; and Mr. Hawtayne, the secretary to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, seems as well known and received in the vicinity of his schools as any English clergyman in his parish. I have not as yet received any visits from the wealthy natives, though some of them have made inquiries through my Sircar, whether such visits would be agreeable to me, to which I of course answered, ‘Extremely so.’ Their progress in the imitation of our habits is very apparent, though still the difference is great. None of them adopt our dress (indeed their own is so much more graceful and so much better adapted to the climate that they would act very absurdly in doing so). But their houses are adorned with verandahs and Corinthian pillars; they have very handsome carriages, often built in England; they speak tolerable English, and they show a considerable liking for European society, where (which unfortunately is not always the case) they are encouraged or permitted to frequent it on terms of anything like equality. Few of them, however, will eat with us; and this opposes a bar to familiar intercourse, which must, even more than fashion and John Bullism, keep them at a distance.

“They are described, especially the Hindoos, as not ill affected to a government under which they thrive, and are allowed to enjoy the fruits of their industry, while many of them still recollect the cruelties and exactions of their former rulers. This is, I feel, an unreasonable letter, but I know your friend-

ship will not be indifferent to details in which I am so much interested ; and I have not been sorry, while the novelty yet remained, to communicate to you my first impressions of a country in all respects so unlike our own, and yet so important to an Englishman. Lord Hastings appears to have been very popular here, and to have done much good. The roads which he made in different parts of Calcutta and its neighbourhood, his splendour and his extreme courtesy, made him liked both by natives and Europeans.

“ Adieu, dear Wynn. Present our mutual best regards to Mrs. Williams Wynn and young folk, and believe me ever,

“ Your obliged and affectionate friend,

“ REGINALD CALCUTTA.”

VISIT TO A BRAHMIN.

BISHOP HEBER TO HON. C. W. W. WYNN.

“ FORT WILLIAM, *Dec. 1st, 1823.*

“ MY DEAR WYNN,—I hope you will, ere this reaches you, have received a long letter from Barrackpoor, giving an account of my first impressions of India. By all which I have yet seen, I do not think they were too favourable. The climate since I wrote is very materially improved, and is now scarcely hotter, and to the full as pleasant as our finest August weather. The mornings and evenings are particularly agreeable, and the sun during the day time, though still too hot to admit of taking exercise, is anything but oppressive to those who are sitting still under a roof or driving in a carriage. The only plague, and a sore plague too, are the musquitoes.

“ I am constantly and sometimes intensely occupied, inso-much that I have as yet had no time whatever for my usual literary pursuits, and scarcely any time for the study of Hindoo-stanee and Persian, or the composition of sermons, of which

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last, unluckily owing to a mistake, my main stock was sent by another ship, which has not yet arrived, so that I have more trouble in this way than I expected, or than is very consistent with my other duties.

“Since my last letter I have become acquainted with some of the wealthy natives of whom I spoke, and we are just returned from passing the evening at one of their country-houses. This is more like an Italian villa than what one should have expected as the residence of Baboo Hurree Mohun Thakoor. Nor are his carriages, the furniture of his house, or the style of his conversation, of a character less decidedly European. He is a fine old man, who speaks English well, is well informed on most topics of general discussion, and talks with the appearance of much familiarity on Franklin, chemistry, natural philosophy, &c. His family is Brahminical, and of singular purity of descent ; but about 400 years ago, during the Mohammedan invasion of India, one of his ancestors having become polluted by the conquerors intruding into his Zennanah, the race is conceived to have lost claim to the knotted cord, and the more rigid Brahmins will not eat with them. Being, however, one of the principal landholders in Bengal, and of a family so ancient, they still enjoy to a great degree the veneration of the common people, which the present head of the house appears to value, since I can hardly reconcile in any other manner his philosophical studies and imitation of many European habits, with the daily and austere devotion which he is said to practise toward the Ganges (in which he bathes three times every twenty-four hours), and his veneration for all the other duties of his ancestors. He is now said, however, to be aiming at the dignity of Raja, a title which at present bears pretty much the same estimation here as a peerage in England, and is conferred by Government in almost the same manner.

“ The house is surrounded by an extensive garden, laid out in formal parterres of roses, intersected by straight walks, with some fine trees, and a chain of tanks, fountains, and summer-houses not ill adapted to a climate where air, water, and sweet smells are almost the only natural objects which can be relished during the greater part of the year. The whole is little less Italian than the façade of his house ; but on my mentioning this similarity, he observed that the taste for such things was brought into India by the Mussulmans. There are also swings, whirligigs, and other amusements for the females of his family, but the strangest was a sort of ‘ Montagne Russe ’ of masonry, very steep, and covered with plaster, down which, he said, the ladies used to *slide*. Of these females, however, we saw none ; indeed, they were all staying at his town-house in Calcutta. He himself received us, at the head of a whole tribe of relations and descendants, on a handsome flight of steps, in a splendid shawl by way of mantle, with a large rosary of coral set in gold, leaning on an ebony crutch with a gold head. Of his grandsons, four very pretty boys, two were dressed like English children of the same age, but the round hat, jacket, and trousers by no means suited their dusky skins so well as the splendid brocade caftans and turbans covered with diamonds, which the two elder wore. On the whole, both Emily and I have been greatly interested with the family, both now and during our previous interviews. We have several other Eastern acquaintances, but none of equal talent, though several learned Moolahs, and one Persian doctor, of considerable reputed sanctity, have called on me. The Raja of Calcutta, and one of the sons of Tippoo Sultan, do not choose, I am told, to call till I have left the fort, since they are not permitted to bring their silver sticks, led horses, carriages, and armed attendants, within the ramparts. In all this nothing strikes me more than the apparent indifference of these men to the measures employed for extend-

ing Christianity, and rendering it more conspicuous in Hindoo-stan. They seem to think it only right and decent that the conquering nation should have its hierarchy and establishment on a handsome scale, and to regard with something little short of approbation the means we take for educating the children of the poor. One of their men of rank has absolutely promised to found a college at Burdwan, with one of our missionaries at its head, and where little children should be clothed and educated under his care. All this is very short indeed of embracing Christianity themselves, but it proves how completely those feelings are gone by, in Bengal at least, which made even the presence of a single missionary the occasion of tumult and alarm. I only hope that no imprudence or overforwardness on our part will revive these angry feelings. Believe me, dear Charles, ever your obliged friend,

"REGINALD CALCUTTA."

BEETHOVEN'S LETTERS ON HIS DEAFNESS.

John Kitto, in his well-known book, 'The Lost Senses,' says, "Of music, it appears that even the educated deaf-mutes can only form any notion by reference to its apparent effects upon others who can hear." He then quotes the following passage from one labouring under this calamity:—"The deaf and dumb cannot enjoy music, because they are destitute of the organ of hearing; but they should be contented, because they can be moved by poetry while they read poems." But take the case of one of the highest musical susceptibilities—devoted to the study of music as a profession—universally acknowledged as one of the greatest of composers—and find him bereft of the power of hearing, except very imperfectly, and we behold one of the most pitiable of human beings. Such a misfortune befel the great Ludwig v. Beethoven. His letters have been translated by Lady Wallace. We select three of this interesting collection, in which the passionate and almost hopeless sorrow of this afflicted genius are poured forth to his friends and to his brothers. We give these letters as exceptions to the general plan of confining this series to English writers:—

EXTRACTS FROM 'BEETHOVEN'S LETTERS.'

*From the collection of Dr. Ludwig Nohl. Translated by
Lady Wallace.*

TO PASTOR AMENDA.

" 1800.

" . . . You must know that one of my most precious faculties, that of hearing, is become very defective ; even while you were still with me I felt indications of this, though I said nothing, but it is now much worse. Whether I shall ever be cured remains yet to be seen : it is supposed to proceed from the state of my digestive organs, but I am almost entirely recovered in that respect. I hope, indeed, that my hearing may improve, but I scarcely think so, for attacks of this kind are the most incurable of all. How sad my life must now be !—forced to shun all that is most dear and precious to me, and to live with such miserable egotists as——&c. . . .

" Oh ! how happy should I now be, had I my full sense of hearing : I would then hasten to you, whereas as it is, I must withdraw from everything. My best years will thus pass away without effecting what my talents and powers might have enabled me to perform. How melancholy is the resignation in which I must take refuge ! I had determined to rise superior to all this, but how is it possible ? If in the course of six months my malady be pronounced incurable, then, Amenda, I shall appeal to you to leave all else and come to me ; when I intend to travel (my affliction is less distressing when playing and composing, and most so in intercourse with others), and you must be my companion. I have a conviction that good fortune will not forsake me, for to what may I not at present aspire ? Since you were here I have written everything except operas and church music. You will not, I know, refuse my petition ; you will help your friend to bear his burden and his

calamity. I have also very much perfected my pianoforte playing, and I hope that a journey of this kind may possibly contribute to your own success in life, and you would thenceforth always remain with me. I duly received all your letters, and though I did not reply to them, you were constantly present with me, and my heart beats as tenderly as ever for you. I beg you will keep the fact of my deafness a profound secret, and not confide it to any human being. Write to me frequently : your letters, however short, console and cheer me, so I shall soon hope to hear from you."

TO WEGELER.

"VIENNA, *June 29, 1800.*

". . . I can with truth say that my life is very wretched ; for nearly two years past I have avoided all society, because I find it impossible to say to people, *I am deaf!* In any other profession this might be more tolerable, but in mine such a condition is truly frightful. Besides, what would my enemies say to this?—and they are not few in number.

"To give you some idea of my extraordinary deafness, I must tell you that in the theatre I am obliged to lean close up against the orchestra in order to understand the actors, and when a little way off I hear none of the high notes of instruments or singers. It is most astonishing that in conversation some people never seem to observe this ; being subject to fits of absence, they attribute it to that cause. I often can scarcely hear a person if speaking low ; I can distinguish the tones but not the words, and yet I feel it intolerable if anyone shouts to me. Heaven alone knows how it is to end ! Vering declares that I shall certainly improve, even if I be not entirely restored.

"How often have I cursed my existence ! Plutarch led me to resignation. I shall strive, if possible, to set fate at defiance, although there must be moments in my life when I cannot fail

to be the most unhappy of God's creatures. I entreat you to say nothing of my affliction to anyone, not even to Lorchen. I confide the secret to you alone, and entreat you some day to correspond with Vering on the subject. If I continue in the same state, I shall come to you in the ensuing spring, when you must engage a house for me somewhere in the country, amid beautiful scenery, and I shall then become a rustic for a year, which may perhaps effect a change. Resignation!—what a miserable refuge! and yet it is my sole remaining one.”

“TO MY BROTHERS CARL AND JOHANN BEETHOVEN.

“HEILIGENSTADT, Oct. 6, 1802.

“Oh! ye who think or declare me to be hostile, morose, and misanthropical, how unjust you are, and how little you know the secret cause of what appears thus to you! My heart and mind were ever from childhood prone to the most tender feelings of affection, and I was always disposed to accomplish something great. But you must remember that six years ago I was attacked by an incurable malady, aggravated by unskilful physicians, deluded from year to year, too, by the hope of relief, and at length forced to the conviction of a *lasting affliction* (the cure of which may go on for years, and perhaps after all prove impracticable).

“Born with a passionate and excitable temperament, keenly susceptible to the pleasures of society, I was yet obliged early in life to isolate myself, and to pass my existence in solitude. If I at any time resolved to surmount all this, oh! how cruelly was I again repelled by the experience, sadder than ever, of my defective hearing!—and yet I found it impossible to say to others, ‘Speak louder, shout, for I am deaf!’ Alas! how could I proclaim the deficiency of a sense which ought to have been more perfect with me than with other men—a sense which I once possessed in the highest perfection, to an extent, indeed,

that few of my profession ever enjoyed! Alas! I cannot do this! Forgive me, therefore, when you see me withdraw from you with whom I would so gladly mingle. My misfortune is doubly severe from causing me to be misunderstood. No longer can I enjoy recreation in social intercourse, refined conversation, or mutual outpourings of thought. Completely isolated, I only enter society when compelled to do so. I must live like an exile. In company I am assailed by the most painful apprehensions, from the dread of being exposed to the risk of my condition being observed. It was the same during the last six months I spent in the country. My intelligent physician recommended me to spare my hearing as much as possible, which was quite in accordance with my present disposition, though sometimes, tempted by my natural inclination for society, I allowed myself to be beguiled into it. But what humiliation when anyone beside me heard a flute in the far distance, while I heard *nothing*, or when others heard a *shepherd singing*, and I still heard *nothing*! Such things brought me to the verge of desperation, and well nigh caused me to put an end to my life. *Art! art* alone, deterred me. Ah! how could I possibly quit the world before bringing forth all that I felt it was my vocation to produce? And thus I spared this miserable life—so utterly miserable that any sudden change may reduce me at any moment from my best condition into the worst. It is decreed that I must now choose *patience* for my guide! This I have done. I hope the resolve will not fail me, steadfastly to persevere till it may please the inexorable fates to cut the thread of my life. Perhaps I may get better, perhaps not. I am prepared for either. Constrained to become a philosopher in my twenty-eighth year! This is no slight trial, and more severe on an artist than on anyone else. God looks into my heart, He searches it, and knows that love for man and feelings of benevolence have their abode

there! Oh! ye who may one day read this, think that you have done me injustice, and let anyone similarly afflicted be consoled, by finding one like himself, who, in defiance of all the obstacles of nature, has done all in his power to be included in the ranks of estimable artists and men. My brothers Carl and Johann, as soon as I am no more, if Professor Schmidt be still alive, beg him in my name, to describe my malady, and to add these pages to the analysis of my disease, that at least, so far as possible, the world may be reconciled to me after my death. I also hereby declare you both heirs of my small fortune (if so it may be called). Share it fairly, agree together and assist each other. You know that anything you did to give me pain has been long forgiven. I thank you, my brother Carl in particular, for the attachment you have shown me of late. My wish is that you may enjoy a happier life, and one more free from care than mine has been. Recommend *Virtue* to your children; that alone, and not wealth, can ensure happiness. I speak from experience. It was *Virtue* alone which sustained me in my misery; I have to thank her and Art for not having ended my life by suicide. Farewell! love each other. I gratefully thank all my friends, especially Prince Lichnowsky and Professor Schmidt. I wish one of you to keep Prince L——'s instruments; but I trust this will give rise to no dissensions between you. If you think it more beneficial, however, you have only to dispose of them. How much I shall rejoice if I can serve you even in the grave! So be it then! I joyfully hasten to meet death. If he comes before I have had the opportunity of developing all my artistic powers, then, notwithstanding my cruel fate, he will come too early for me, and I should wish for him at a more distant period; but even then I shall be content, for his advent will release me from a state of endless suffering. Come when he may, I shall meet him with courage. Farewell! Do not quite forget me even in

death. I deserve this from you, because during my life I so often thought of you and wished to make you happy. Amen!

“LUDWIG VON BEETHOVEN.”

(Written on the outside.)

“Thus, then, I take leave of you, and with sadness too. The fond hope I brought with me here, of being to a certain degree cured, now utterly forsakes me. As autumn leaves fall and wither, so are my hopes blighted. Almost as I came, I depart. Even the lofty courage that so often animated me in the lovely days of summer is gone for ever. Oh! Providence! vouchsafe me one day of pure felicity! How long have I been estranged from the glad echo of true joy! When! oh, my God! when shall I again feel it in the temple of nature and of man? Never? Ah! that would be too hard!”

WILLIAM PITT, EARL OF CHATHAM,
TO HIS NEPHEW THOMAS PITT, WHEN AT CAMBRIDGE.

It is interesting to contemplate the great orator and statesman, in the interval between 1763 and 1765, when he was free from the responsibilities and cares of office, devoting a portion of his time to the instruction of his nephew upon the most momentous of subjects. The advice to a Cambridge student upon his moral and religious obligations was perhaps more than commonly necessary at a time of great laxity of principles and conduct in the two chief seats of learning. But the advice is fitted for all times and seasons, and will not be read without benefit by the young after a hundred years have elapsed.

“BATH, Jan. 14, 1754.

“MY DEAR NEPHEW,—You will hardly have read over one very long letter from me, before you are troubled with a second. I intended to have writ soon, but I do it the sooner on account

of your letter to your aunt, which she transmitted to me here. If anything, my dear boy, could have happened to raise you higher in my esteem, and to endear you more to me, it is the amiable abhorrence you feel for the scene of vice and folly (and of real misery and perdition, under the false notion of pleasure and spirit), which has opened to you at your college ; and at the same time, the manly, brave, generous, and wise resolution and true spirit, with which you resisted and repulsed the first attempts upon a mind and heart, I thank God, infinitely too firm and noble, as well as too elegant and enlightened, to be in any danger of yielding to such contemptible and wretched corruptions. You charm me with the description of Mr. Wheeler ; and while you say you could adore him, I could adore you for the natural, generous love of virtue, which speaks in all you feel, say, or do. As to your companions, let this be your rule. Cultivate the acquaintance with Mr. Wheeler, which you have so fortunately begun ; and in general be sure to associate with men much older than yourself : scholars whenever you can ; but always with men of decent and honourable lives. As their age and learning, superior both to your own, must necessarily, in good sense and in the view of acquiring knowledge from them, entitle them to all deference, and submission of your own lights to theirs, you will particularly practise that first and greatest rule for pleasing in conversation, as well as for drawing instruction and improvement from the company of one's superiors in age and knowledge ; namely, to be a patient, attentive, and well-bred hearer, and to answer with modesty ; to deliver your own opinion sparingly, and with proper diffidence ; and if you are forced to desire further information, or explanation, to do it with proper apologies for the trouble you give ; or, if obliged to differ, to do it with all possible candour, and an unprejudiced desire to find and ascertain truth, with an entire indifference to the side on which that

truth is to be found. There is likewise a particular attention required to contradict with good manners ; such as, ' begging pardon,' ' begging leave to doubt,' and such like phrases. Pythagoras enjoined his scholars an absolute silence for a long noviciate. I am far from approving such taciturnity ; but I highly recommend the end and intent of Pythagoras's injunction, which is, to dedicate the first parts of life more to hear and learn, in order to collect materials, out of which to form opinions founded on proper lights, and well-examined sound principles, than to be presuming, prompt, and flippant in hazarding one's own slight crude notions of things, and thereby exposing the nakedness and emptiness of the mind, like a house opened to company before it is fitted either with necessities or any ornaments for their reception or entertainment. And not only will this disgrace follow from such temerity and presumption, but a more serious danger is sure to ensue, that is, the embracing errors for truth, prejudices for principles : when that is once done (no matter how vainly and weakly), the adhering, perhaps to false and dangerous notions, only because one has declared for them, and submitting, for life, the understanding and conscience to a yoke of base and servile prejudices, vainly taken up and obstinately retained. This will never be your danger ; but I thought it not amiss to offer these reflections to your thoughts. As to your manner of behaving towards these unhappy young gentlemen you describe, let it be manly and easy ; decline their parties with civility ; retort their raillery with raillery, always tempered with good breeding : if they banter your regularity, order, decency, and love of study, banter in return their neglect of them ; and venture to own frankly that you came to Cambridge to learn what you can, not to follow what they are pleased to call pleasure. In short, let your external behaviour to them be as full of politeness and ease, as your inward estimation of them is full of pity mixed with contempt.

“I come now to the part of the advice I have to offer to you, which most nearly concerns your welfare, and upon which every good and honourable purpose of your life will assuredly turn. I mean the keeping up in your heart the true sentiment of religion. If you are not right towards God, you can never towards men: the noblest sentiment of the human breast is here brought to the test. Is gratitude in the number of a man's virtues? If it be, the highest Benefactor demands the warmest returns of gratitude, love, and praise. *Ingratum qui dixerit, omnia dixit.* If a man wants this virtue, where there are infinite obligations to excite and quicken it, he will be likely to want all others towards his fellow-creatures, whose utmost gifts are poor, compared to those he daily receives at the hands of his never-failing Almighty friend. ‘Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth,’ is big with the deepest wisdom:—‘The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and an upright heart, that is understanding.’ This is eternally true, whether the wits and rakes of Cambridge allow it or not: nay, I must add of this religious wisdom, ‘Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.’ Hold fast, therefore, by this sheet-anchor of happiness, religion; you will often want it in the times of most danger, the storms and tempests of life. Cherish true religion as preciously as you will fly, with abhorrence and contempt, superstition and enthusiasm. The first is the perfection and glory of the human nature; the two last the depravation and disgrace of it. Remember, the essence of religion is, a heart void of offence towards God and man; not subtle speculative opinions, but an active vital principle of faith. The words of a heathen were so fine that I must give them to you: *Compositum jus, fasque animo; sanctosque recessus mentis, et incoctum generoso pectus honesto.*

“Go on my dear child, in the admirable disposition you have towards all that is right and good, and make yourself the love

and admiration of the world. I have neither paper nor words to tell you how tenderly I am yours."

DR. PARR TO MR. THOMAS MOORE.

When Moore was engaged upon his '*Life of Sheridan*,' the biographer applied to the early instructor of one whose great abilities might naturally infer some precocity of talent. The account of Sheridan's boyhood may offer some consolation to the parent or friend who may be too apt to judge a lad dull and incapable, who is "inferior to his school-fellows in the ordinary business of a school," and who did not distinguish himself "by Latin or English composition, in prose or verse." Idleness was the great fault of one whom Parr calls "the varlet;" but this disparaging account is neutralized by the admission, that "Sumner and I saw in him vestiges of superior intellect." Many years later Dr. Parr, in his preface to '*Bellendenus*,' regarded Sheridan as the most transcendent of modern orators.

THE BOYHOOD OF SHERIDAN.

"HATTON, Aug. 3, 1818.

"DEAR SIR,—With the aid of a scribe, I sit down to fulfil my promise about Mr. Sheridan. There was little in his boyhood worth communicating. He was inferior to many of his school-fellows in the ordinary business of a school; and I do not remember any one instance in which he distinguished himself by Latin or English composition, in prose or verse. Nathaniel Halhed, one of his schoolfellows, wrote well in Latin and Greek. Richard Archdell, another schoolfellow, excelled in English verse. Richard Sheridan aspired to no rivalry with either of them. He was at the uppermost part of the fifth form, but he never reached the sixth; and if I mistake not, he had no opportunity of attending the most difficult, and the most honourable part of school business, when the Greek plays were taught: and it was the custom of Harrow to teach these,

at least every year. He went through his lessons in Horace, and Virgil, and Homer, well enough, for a time. But, in the absence of the upper master, Dr. Sumner, it once fell in my way to instruct the two upper forms ; and upon calling up Dick Sheridan, I found him not only slovenly in construing, but unusually defective in his Greek grammar. Knowing him to be a clever fellow, I did not fail to probe and teaze him. I stated his case with great good-humour to the upper master, who was one of the best-tempered men in the world ; and it was agreed between us that Richard should be called oftener, and worked more severely. The varlet was not suffered to remain up in his place ; but was to take his station near the master's table, where the voice of no prompter could reach him ; and in this defenceless condition, he was so harassed that he at last gathered up some grammatical rules, and prepared himself for his lessons. While this tormenting process was inflicted on him, I now and then upbraided him. But you will take notice, that he did not incur any corporal punishment for his idleness ; his industry was just sufficient to protect him from disgrace ; all the while Sumner and I saw in him vestiges of superior intellect. His eye, his countenance, his general manner, were striking. His answers to any common question were prompt and acute. We knew the esteem and even admiration, which, somehow or other, all his schoolfellows felt for him. He was mischievous enough, but his pranks were accompanied by a sort of vivacity and cheerfulness, which delighted Sumner and myself ; I had much talk with him about his apple-loft, for the supply of which all the gardens in the neighbourhood were taxed, and some of the lower boys were employed to furnish it. I threatened, but without asperity, to trace the depredators, through his associates, up to their leader. He, with perfect good humour, set me at defiance, and I never could bring the charge home to him. All boys

and all masters were pleased with him. I often praised him as a lad of great talents, often exhorted him to use them well; but my exhortations were fruitless. I take for granted, that his taste was silently improved, and that he knew well the little which he did know. He was removed from school too soon by his father, who was the intimate friend of Sumner, and whom I often met at his house. Sumner had a fine voice, fine ear, fine taste, and therefore pronunciation was frequently the favourite subject between him and Tom Sheridan. I was present at many of their discussions and disputes, and sometimes took a very active part in them; but Richard was not present. The father, you know, was a wrong-headed, whimsical man, and, perhaps his scanty circumstances were one of the reasons which prevented him from sending Richard to the University. He must have been aware, as Sumner and I were, that Richard's mind was not cast in any ordinary mould. I ought to have told you, that Richard, when a boy, was a great reader of English poetry; but his exercises afforded no proof of his proficiency. In truth, he, as a boy, was quite careless about literary fame. I should suppose that his father, without any regular system, polished his taste, and supplied his memory with anecdotes about our best writers in our Augustan age. The grandfather you know, lived familiarly with Swift. I have heard of him as an excellent scholar. His boys in Ireland, once performed a Greek play, and when Sir William Jones and I were talking over this event, I determined to make the experiment in England. I selected some of my best boys, and they performed the *Œdipus Tyrannus*, and *Trachinians* of Sophocles. I wrote some Greek iambics to vindicate myself from the imputation of singularity, and grieved I am that I did not keep a copy of them. Milton, you may remember, recommends what I attempted.

"I saw much of Sheridan's father after the death of Sumner,

and after my own removal from Harrow to Stanmore. I respected him ; he really liked me, and did me some important services, but I never met him and Richard together. I often inquired about Richard, and from the father's answers, found they were not upon good terms ; but neither he nor I ever spoke of his son's talents, but in terms of the highest praise."

LORD COLLINGWOOD TO LADY COLLINGWOOD.

After the battle of Trafalgar, Collingwood, who was second in command to Nelson, was raised to the peerage, and for three years underwent the most wearisome of services in the Mediterranean. But, however unremitting and watchful in the discharge of his duty, his heart was ever with his family at home. There are no more charming letters than are to be found in a selection from those of Collingwood, published in 1828. The following, addressed to his wife, has, amongst many other portions of his correspondence, that charm of tenderness which is inexpressibly touching in the utterances of a sailor or a soldier, surrounded on every side by difficulties and dangers:—

CHERISHED HOPES OF RETURNING TO HIS FAMILY.

"OCEAN, *June 16, 1806.*

"This day, my love, is the anniversary of our marriage, and I wish you many happy returns of it. If ever we have peace, I hope to spend my latter days amid my family, which is the only sort of happiness I can enjoy. After this life of labour, to retire to peace and quietness is all I look for in the world. Should we decide to change the place of our dwelling, our route would of course be to the southward of Morpeth ; but then I should be for ever regretting those beautiful views which are nowhere to be exceeded ; and even the rattling of that old waggon that used to pass our door at six o'clock on a winter's morning had its charms. The fact is, whenever I think how I

am to be happy again, my thoughts carry me back to Morpeth, where, out of the fuss and parade of the world, surrounded by those I loved most dearly, and who loved me, I enjoyed as much happiness as my nature is capable of. Many things that I see in the world, give me a distaste to the finery of it. The great knaves are not like those poor unfortunates, who, driven perhaps to distress from accidents which they could not prevent, or at least not educated in principles of honour and honesty, are hanged for some little thievery; while a knave of education and high-breeding, who brandishes his honour in the eyes of the world, would rob a state to its ruin. For the first I feel pity and compassion; for the latter, abhorrence and contempt: they are the tenfold vicious.

“Have you read—but what I am more interested about, is your sister with you, and is she well and happy? Tell her—God bless her!—I wish I were with you, that we might have a good laugh. God bless me! I have scarcely laughed these three years. I am here with a very reduced force, having been obliged to make detachments to all quarters. This leaves me weak, while the Spaniards and French within are daily gaining strength. They have patched and pieced until they have now a very considerable fleet. Whether they will venture out, I do not know: if they come, I have no doubt we shall do an excellent deed, and then I will bring them to England myself.

“How do the dear girls go on? I would have them taught geometry, which is of all sciences in the world the most entertaining: it expands the mind more to the knowledge of all things in nature, and better teaches to distinguish between truths and such things as have the appearance of being truths, yet are not, than any other. Their education, and the proper cultivation of the sense which God has given them, are the objects on which my happiness most depends. To inspire

them with a love of everything that is honourable and virtuous, though in rags, and with contempt for vanity in embroidery, is the way to make them the darlings of my heart. They should not only read, but it requires a careful selection of books; nor should they ever have access to two at the same time: but when a subject is begun, it should be finished before anything else is undertaken. How would it enlarge their minds if they could acquire a sufficient knowledge of mathematics and astronomy, to give them an idea of the beauty and wonders of the creation! I am persuaded that the generality of people, and particularly fine ladies, only adore God because they are told it is proper, and the fashion to go to church; but I would have my girls gain such knowledge of the works of the creation, that they may have a fixed idea of the nature of that Being who could be the author of such a world. Whenever they have that, nothing on this side the moon will give them much uneasiness of mind. I do not mean that they should be stoics, or want the common feelings for the sufferings that flesh is heir to; but they would then have a source of consolation for the worst that could happen.

"Tell me how do the trees which I planted thrive? Is there shade under the three oaks for a comfortable summer-seat? Do the poplars grow at the walk, and does the wall of the terrace stand firm? My bankers tell me that all my money in their hands is exhausted by fees on the peerage, and that I am in their debt, which is a new epoch in my life, for it is the first time I was ever in debt since I was a midshipman. Here I get nothing; but then my expenses are nothing, and I do not want it particularly, now that I have got my knives, forks, teapot, and the things you were so kind as to send me."

CHAPTER XVI.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL PASSAGES FROM VARIOUS WRITERS.



1. POCAHONTAS.—*From Smith's 'History of Virginia.'*
2. SIR KENELM DIGBY, AND HIS SYMPATHETIC POWDER.
3. AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF JOHN GALT.—*Extract from 'Sir Andrew Wylie.'*
4. NORTHCOTE AND REYNOLDS.

CHAPTER XVI.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF POCAHONTAS.

From Smith's 'History of Virginia.'

IN the last decade of the reign of James I., a female from the Virginian settlements was brought to Court, where "divers persons of great rank and quality were very kind to her." The history of Pocahontas has often been told in prose and verse, but never more effectively than by Captain Smith, who, in requital of her former courtesies, "made her qualities known to the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty and her Court."

Captain Smith thus introduces his narrative :—

"During this time (about the year 1617) the Lady Rebecca, alias Pocahontas, daughter to Powhatan, by the diligent care of Mr. John Rolfe, her husband and his friends, was taught to speak such English as might well be understood, well instructed in Christianity, and was become very formal and civil after our English manner ; she had also by him a child, which she loved most dearly, and the treasurer and company took order both for the maintenance of her and it, besides there were divers persons of great rank and quality had been very kind to her ; and before the arrival at London, Captain Smith, to deserve her former courtesies, made her qualities known to the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty and her Court, and wrote a little book to this effect to the Queen : an abstract whereof followeth :

"Some ten years ago, being in Virginia, and taken prisoner by the power of Powhatan, their chief king, I received from this great savage exceeding great courtesy, especially from his

son Nautauquaus, the most manliest, comeliest, boldest spirit I ever met with in a savage, and his sister Pocahontas, the king's most dear and well-beloved daughter, being but a child of twelve or thirteen years of age ; whose compassionate pitiful heart, of my desperate state, gave me much cause to respect her. I being the first Christian this proud King and his grim attendants ever saw, and thus enthralled in their barbarous power, I cannot say I felt the least occasion of want that was in the power of those my mortal foes to prevent, notwithstanding all their threats. After some six weeks' fattening among these savage courtiers, at the minute of my execution, she hazarded the beating out of her own brains to save mine ; and not only that, but so prevailed with her father, that I was safely conducted to James Town, where I found about eight-and-thirty miserable poor and sick creatures, to keep possession of all those large territories of Virginia, such was the weakness of this poor commonwealth, as had the savages not fed us, we directly had starved.

“ And this relief, most gracious Queen, was commonly brought us by this Lady Pocahontas. Notwithstanding all these passages when inconstant Fortune turned our peace to war, this tender virgin would still not spare to dare to visit us, and by her our jars have been oft appeased, and our wants still supplied. Were it the policy of her father thus to employ her, or the ordinance of God thus to make her His instrument, or her extraordinary affection to our nation, I know not ; but of this I am sure, —when her father, with the utmost of his policy and power, sought to surprise me, having but eighteen with me, the dark night could not affright her from coming through the irksome woods, and with watered eyes, gave me intelligence, with her best advice, to escape his fury ; which had he known, he had surely slain her. James Town, with her wild train, she as freely frequented as her father's habitation ; and during the

time of two or three years, she next, under God, was still the instrument to preserve this colony from death, famine and utter confusion ; which if in those times had once been dissolved, Virginia might have lain as it was at our first arrival to this day. Since then this business having been turned and varied by many accidents from that I left it at, it is most certain, after a long and troublesome war, after my departure, betwixt her father and our colony, all which time, she was not heard of, about two years after she herself was taken prisoner, being so detained near two years longer ; the colony by that means was relieved, peace concluded, and at last, rejecting her barbarous condition, was married to an English gentleman, with whom at this present she is in England ; the first Christian ever of that nation, the first Virginian ever spake English, or had a child in marriage by an Englishman,—a matter surely, if my meaning be truly considered and well understood, worthy a Princess's understanding.

“ Being about this time preparing to set sail for New England, I could not stay to do her that service I desired, and she well deserved ; but hearing she was at Branford, with divers of my friends, I went to see her. After a modest salutation, without any word, she turned about, obscured her face as not seeming well contented ; and in that humour, her husband, with divers others, we all left her two or three hours, repenting myself to have writ she could speak English. But not long after, she began to talk, and remembered me well what courtesies she had done ; saying, ‘ You did promise Powhatan what was yours should be his, and he the like to you ; you called him father, being in his land a stranger, and by the same reason, so must I do you : ’ which, though I would have excused, I durst not allow of that title, because she was a King's daughter. With a well-set countenance, she said, ‘ Were you not afraid to come into my father's country, and caused fear in

him and all his people (but me) ; and fear you here I should call you father? I tell you then I will, and you shall call me child ; and so I will be for ever and ever your countryman. They did tell us always you were dead, and I knew no other till I came to Plymouth ; yet Powhatan did command Vetamatomakkin to seek you and know the truth, because your countrymen will lie much.'

"The small time I staid in London, divers courtiers and others, my acquaintances, hath gone with me to see her, that generally concluded, they did think God had a great hand in her conversion, and they have seen many English ladies worse favoured, proportioned and behavoured ; and as since I have heard it pleased both the King and Queen's Majesty honourably to esteem her accompanied with that honourable lady the Lady De la Warre, and that honourable Lord, her husband, and divers other persons of good qualities, both publicly at the masks and otherwise, to her great satisfaction and content, which doubtless she would have deserved, had she lived to arrive in Virginia."

She died at Gravesend, in 1617, on her way home.

SIR KENELM DIGBY.

The cure of wounds by sympathy has been rendered familiar to us by Sir Walter Scott in a note upon the third canto of the 'Lay of the Last Minstrel.' Sir Kenelm Digby, one of the most learned and accomplished Cavaliers, in a Latin discourse pronounced at Montpellier, of which a translation was published in 1658, thus describes, with a most perfect good faith, a remarkable circumstance that came within his own knowledge :—

"Mr. James Howel (well known in France for his public works, and particularly for his *Dendrologie*, translated into

French by Mons. Baudouin) coming by chance as two of his best friends were fighting in duel, he did his endeavour to part them ; and putting himself between them, seized with his left hand upon the hilt of the sword of one of the combatants, while, with his right hand, he laid hold of the blade of the other. They, being transported with fury one against the other, struggled to rid themselves of the hindrance their friend made, that they should not kill one another ; and one of them, roughly drawing the blade of his sword, cut to the very bone the nerves and muscles of Mr. Howel's hand ; and then the other disengaged his hilts and gave a cross blow on his adversary's head, which glanced towards his friend, who, heaving up his sore hand to save the blow, he was wounded on the back of his hand as he had been before within. It seems some strange constellation reigned then against him, that he should lose so much blood by parting two such dear friends, who, had they been themselves, would have hazarded both their lives to have preserved his ; but this involuntary effusion of blood by them prevented that which they should have drawn one from the other. For they, seeing Mr. Howel's face besmeared with blood, by heaving up his wounded hand, then both ran to embrace him ; and, having searched his hurts, they bound up his hand with one of his garters, to close the veins which were cut and bled abundantly. They brought him home and sent for a surgeon. But this being heard of at court, the king sent one of his own surgeons ; for his Majesty much affected the said Mr. Howel.

“It was my chance to be lodged hard by him ; and four or five days after, as I was making myself ready, he came to my house and prayed me to view his wounds ; ‘for I understand,’ said he, ‘that you have extraordinary remedies on such occasions, and my surgeons apprehend some fear that it may grow to a gangrene, and so the hand must be cut off.’ In effect his

countenance discovered that he was in much pain, which he said was insupportable, in regard of the extreme inflammation. I told him I would willingly serve him ; but if haply he knew the manner how I would cure him, without touching or seeing him, it may be he would not expose himself to my manner of curing, because he would think it, peradventure, either ineffectual or superstitious. He replied, ' the wonderful things which many have related unto me of your way of medicinement makes me nothing doubt at all of its efficacy, and all that I have to say unto you is comprehended in the Spanish proverb, *Hagase el Milagro, y hagalo Mahome*—Let the miracle be done, though Mahomet do it.'

"I asked him then for anything that had the blood upon it ; so he presently sent for his garter, wherewith his hand was first bound ; and as I called for a basin of water, as I would wash my hands, I took a handful of powder of vitriol, which I had in my study, and presently dissolved it. As soon as the bloody garter was brought me, I put it within the basin, observing in the interim what Mr. Howel did, who stood talking with a gentleman in a corner of my chamber, not regarding at all what I was doing ; but he stared suddenly as if he had found some strange alteration in himself. I asked him what he ailed ? ' I know not what ails me, but I find that I feel no more pain. Methinks that a pleasing kind of freshness, as it were a wet cold napkin, did spread over my hand, which hath taken away the inflammation that tormented me before.' I replied, ' Since then you feel already so good effect of my medicament, I advise you to cast away all your plaisters ; only keep the wound clean, and in a moderate temper between heat and cold.' This was presently reported to the Duke of Buckingham, and a little after to the king, who were both very curious to know the circumstance of the business, which was, that after dinner I took the garter out of the water, and put it to dry before a great

fire. It was scarce dry, but Mr. Howel's servant came running, that his master felt as much burning as ever he had done, if not more ; for the heat was such as if his hand were 'twixt coals of fire. I answered, although that had happened at present, yet he should find ease in a short time ; for I knew the reason of this new accident, and would provide accordingly ; for his master should be free from the inflammation, it may be before he could possibly return to him ; but in case he found no ease, I wished him to come presently back again ; if not, he might forbear coming. Thereupon he went ; and at the instant I did put again the garter into the water, thereupon he found his master without any pain at all. To be brief there was no sense of pain afterward ; but within five or six days the wounds were cicatrized, and entirely healed."

An interesting addition to the extensive series of the works of the Camden Society has been recently made in a volume entitled, 'Journal of a Voyage into the Mediterranean, by Sir Kenelm Digby, A.D. 1628. Edited, from the original Autograph Manuscript in the possession of William Watkin E. Wynne, Esq., by John Bruce, Esq., F.S.A.' The biography of Sir Kenelm by Mr. Bruce is complete, and, I need scarcely say, is wholly trustworthy. He condenses the account I have given of the sympathetic powder, and then proceeds to inquire into the nature of the delusion entertained by a man of remarkable ability.

"The king astonished at the cure, and having, as Sir Kenelm assures us, 'a particular talent and marvellous sagacity to discuss natural things and penetrate them to the very marrow,' after some drolling, 'which he could do with a very good grace, about a magician and a sorcerer,' asked Digby what was his secret. Admitted to an acquaintance with the mystery, his Majesty made 'sundry proofs' of his new power, and 'received singular satisfaction' from the results. Sir Theodore Mayerne, the royal physician, finding the King practising with vitriol, applied to Digby for explanation, which he willingly gave him.

From him the secret, which Digby professed to have received from a Carmelite who had brought it from the East, got abroad, and at the end of five-and-thirty years Digby remarked that there was scarcely a country barber but was acquainted with it."

"Upon this narrative," continues Mr. Bruce, "it may be remarked, that it was not written until more than thirty years after the occurrence of the events to which it relates, a lapse of time which is quite sufficient to account for some of its more obvious touches of the marvellous. With respect to the cure itself, it is strange that the gossiping subject of it, who seems to have often racked his brains for a topic for a letter, never mentions it. He writes to Sir Kenelm with extraordinary deference, and refers to him always with the greatest respect, as to a person his superior in station and acquirements, but there is never an allusion to the Powder of Sympathy. Of the fact of the cure, or that Sir Kenelm accompanied it with the vitriol and the dipped garter, we would not be understood to express a doubt, but Sir Kenelm's theories respecting a sympathetic cause will not bear consideration for a moment. Without any of the pretended Carmelite's nostrums there is quite sufficient in the narrative itself to account for the cure. The severed parts had been brought together by the king's surgeon; he had also applied some stimulating plaisters which irritated the wound, interfered with natural attempts at adhesion, and caused pain; upon their removal the relief was almost instantaneous. Nature, set at liberty, proceeded in her own way to effect the cure, and would have done so if the vitriol and the garter had never existed. Such, however, was not the opinion of Sir Kenelm's contemporaries. King James probably thought it a wonder upon a par with the virtues of his own royal touch, and the world at large looked upon Sir Kenelm with a kind of awe."

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF JOHN GALT.

John Galt, who was born at Irvine, Ayrshire, in 1779, and who died in 1839, is entitled to a durable place amongst the English novelists by his once popular performances of the 'Annals of the Parish,' and 'The Ayrshire Legatees.' After various reverses of fortune, he fought his way to a position of high trust in connection with the affairs of Canada. Having enjoyed for two or three years the confidence of Government and the Canadian Company, he committed some indiscretions which ended in his recall home. In the period of his prosperity he was popularly called "The King of Canada." After his fall he maintained himself by his literary labours; and perhaps even the example of Sir Walter Scott does not present a more remarkable instance of energy and perseverance than that of Scott's afflicted countryman. For Galt, from 1832 to the time of his death, was suffering under the most hopeless paralysis, but he persevered; and of the ability, which no sickness and no penury can overcome, we have two examples in his novels of 'Sir Andrew Wylie,' and 'Lawrie Todd.' At this season, also, he published his Autobiography and his Literary Life and Miscellanies. We subjoin the following extracts:—

EXTRACT FROM THE 'AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF JOHN GALT.'

"At the suggestion of a friend, I am induced to mention several accidental circumstances, which he thinks will be amusing to my readers, particularly to give an explanation of the origin of the interview, in Windsor Park, between Sir Andrew Wylie and George the Third. He informs me, that it is considered as the transcript of a real occurrence, and that I am supposed to have had, myself, a meeting with his Majesty similar to the scene described; otherwise, it is thought, his familiar manner could not have been so represented.

"The supposition is not correct in fact, but the impression which I entertain of two droll incidents with the 'half gilly, half gutchard' old king, has contributed to the force of the picture. Some eight-and-twenty years ago, my friends Park

and Spence were in London, and I went with them to see Windsor Castle. Wyatt's great staircase was then nearly finished, but the interior scaffolding was not all removed. In looking at the construction, I got up the main flight of steps, and was gazing about, when the king was announced. Before I could get down, his Majesty, with the architect, came in, and I was obliged, in consequence, to remain for some time standing where I was.

"The King observed us, particularly myself, who was so conspicuous, and lingered with Mr. Wyatt, until he had satisfied his curiosity by looking at us ; speaking all the time, 'his tongue never lay,' and looking about as he was speaking. It was evident that he spoke more at random than seriously addressed the architect, being occupied in noticing us. Something in his manner drew my attention, and from that interview, which lasted probably several minutes, I caught a durable remembrance of his peculiarities. I see him still.

"The other occasion was still more characteristic of the good intentioned venerable man. It was on the morning of that day on which he dissolved the parliament of the Whig Administration, formed after the death of Mr. Pitt, I happened to be with a friend, at morning prayers, in the Oriel Chapel of the castle. The King was there, and the late Princess Amelia, with a few attendants, besides the gentlemen of the chapelry ; in all, about twenty persons. It was a sight worthy of remembrance. The old man remained seated, with an humble worshipping demeanour, while the prayer for the King was said ; but he stood up, and repeated aloud, with pathos, the petition for the people.

"With this really touching solemnity, all gravity however fled from me. It is well known, that his Majesty was very near-sighted, a defect which caused him to hold the prayer-book close to his face : over the top of the leaves, with the

sly simplicity of an urchin at school, he frequently took a peep at us, but whenever he caught my eye, cowered, as it were, down, afraid, and 'conned his task' in the most exemplary manner. The way he did this was exceedingly amusing; but the worst of it was, that I could not conceal the effect, and accordingly 'I and the King' continued to play at bo-peep during all the remainder of the service.

"To these two incidents, as they may be called, I owe those particular traits of individuality which have been embodied in the scene with Sir Andrew Wylie; and which I believe are not unlike. I know from good authority that George the Fourth remarked, in reading the description, it was 'by far the likeliest portrait of his Majesty he had ever seen.'"

FROM 'SIR ANDREW WYLIE,' BY JOHN GALT.

'*Windsor Park.*' Chapter LXXV.

"By sunrise on the Sunday morning Wylie was brushing the early dew in the little park, to taste the freshness of the morning gale, or, as he himself better expressed it, to take a snuff of caller air on the brow of the hill. But healthful exercise was not his only reason for being so soon abroad; it occurred to him in the watches of the night, that as his Majesty was an early riser, the household too would of course be stirring with the cock; and that some of them might be more readily met with at that time than later in the morning. Accordingly, he kept a sharp look-out on all sides as he strolled through the park; but he saw only a solitary laundress with a basket of linen on her head, going to the town, and three or four lumpish country boys that came whistling along the footpath from Datchet, in their clod shoes, with white cotton stockings, and the knees of their new velveteen breeches shown in front

beneath clean smock-frocks ; the tails of which, behind, were tucked up to show their Sunday coats.

“ Somewhat disappointed, but thinking he was still too early for the inmates of the palace, he prolonged his walk towards the meadows ; and in stepping over a stile, he saw, close before him, a stout and tall elderly man, in a plain blue coat, with scarlet cuffs and collar, which at first he took for a livery. There was something, however, in the air of the wearer, which convinced him that he could not be a servant : and an ivory-headed cane, virled with gold, which he carried in a negligent poking manner, led him to conclude that he was either an old officer, or one of the Poor Knights of Windsor ; for he had added to his learning, in the course of the previous evening, a knowledge of the existence of this appendage to the noble Order of the Garter. ‘ This,’ said the embryo courtier to himself, ‘ is just the vera thing I hae been seeking. I’ll mak up to this decent carle ; for nae dout he’s weel acquaint with a’ about the king,’ and he stepped alertly forward. But before he had advanced many paces, the old gentleman turned round, and seeing a stranger, stopped ; and looking at him for two or three seconds, said to himself, loud enough, however, to be heard, ‘ Strange man—don’t know him—don’t know him ;’ and then he paused till our hero had come up.

“ ‘ Gude-day, sir,’ said Wylie, as he approached ; ‘ ye’re early a-fit on the Sabbath morning ; but I’m thinking his Majesty, honest man, sets you a’ here an example of sobriety and early rising.’

“ ‘ Scotchman, eh !’ said the old gentleman ; ‘ fine morning, fine morning, sir—weather warmer here than with you ? What part of Scotland do you come from ? How do you like Windsor ? Come to see the king, eh ?’ and loudly he made the echoes ring with his laughter.

“ The senator was a little at a loss which question to answer

first ; but delighted with the hearty freedom of the salutation, jocularly said, 'It's no easy to answer so many questions all at once ; but if ye'll no object to the method, I would say that ye guess right, sir, and that I come from the shire of Ayr.'

" 'Ah, shire of Ayr!—a fine country that—good farming there—no smuggling now among you, eh?—No excisemen shooting lords now? Bad game, bad game. Poor Lord Eglington had a true taste for agriculture ; the country I have heard, owes him much.—Still improving?—Nothing like it.—The war needs men.—Corn is our dragon's teeth.—Potatoes do as well in Ireland, eh?'

" The humour of this sally tickled our hero as well as the author of it, and they both laughed themselves into greater intimacy.

" 'But, sir,' said Andrew, 'as I'm only a stranger here, I would like to ask you a question or two about the king, just as to what sort of a man he really is ; for we can place no sort of dependence on newspapers or history books, in matters anent rulers and men of government.'

" 'What ! like Sir Robert Walpole—not believe history?—Scotchmen very cautious.' But the old gentleman added in a graver accent, 'The king is not so good as some say to him he is ; nor is he so bad as others say of him. But I know that he has conscientiously endeavoured to do his duty, and the best men can do no more, be their trusts high or low.'

" 'That, I believe, we a' in general think ; even the black-nebs never dispute his honesty, though they undervalue his talents. But what I wish to know and understand, is no wi' regard to his kingly faculties, but as to his familiar ways and behaviour—the things in which he is like the generality of the world.'

" 'Ha !' said the stranger briskly, relapsing into his wonted freedom, 'very particular, very particular, indeed. What reason

friend, have you to be so particular?—Must have some?—People never so without reason.’

“ ‘Surely, sir, it’s a very natural curiosity for a subject to enquire what sort of a man the sovereign is, whom he has sworn to honour and obey, and to bear true allegiance with hand and heart.’

“ ‘True, true, true!’ exclaimed the old gentleman.—‘Just remark.—Come on business to England?—What business?’

“ ‘My chief business, in truth, sir, at present here, is to see and learn something about the king. I have no other turn in hand at this time.’

“ ‘Turn, turn!’ cried the stranger, perplexed.—‘What turn? Would you place the king on your lathe, eh?’

“Our hero did not well know what to make of his quick and versatile companion; and while the old gentleman was laughing at the jocular turn which he had himself given to the Scotticism, he said, ‘I’m thinking, friend, ye’re commanded no to speak with strangers anent His Majesty’s conduct; for ye blink the question, as they say in Parliament.’

“ ‘Parliament!—Been there?—How do you like it? Much cry and little wool among them, eh?’

“ ‘Ye say Gude’s truth, sir; and I wish they would make their speeches as short and pithy as the King’s. I’m told His Majesty has a very gracious and pleasant delivery,’ replied our hero, pawkily; and the stranger, not heeding his drift, said, with simplicity—

“ ‘It was so thought when he was young; but he is now an old man, and not what I have known him.’

“ ‘I suppose,’ replied our hero, ‘that you have been long in his service?’

“ ‘Yes, I am one of his oldest servants. Ever since I could help myself,’ was the answer, with a sly smile, ‘I may say I have been his servant.’

“‘And I dinna dout,’ replied the senator, ‘that you have had an easy post.’

“‘I have certainly obeyed his will,’ cried the stranger in a lively laughing tone; but changing into a graver, he added—‘But what may be my reward, at least in this world, it is for you and others to judge.’

“‘I’m mista’en then, if it shouldna be liberal,’ replied Andrew, ‘for ye seem a man of discretion; and, doubtless, merit the post ye have so long possessed. May be some day in Parliament I may call this conversation to mind for your behoof. The King canna gang far wrang sae lang as he keeps counsel with such douce and prudent-like men, even though ye hae a bit flight of the fancy. What’s your name?’

“The old gentleman looked sharply; but in a moment his countenance resumed its wonted cheerfulness, and he said, ‘So you are in Parliament, eh?—I have a seat there, too. Don’t often go, however. Perhaps may see you there—good-bye, good-bye.’

“‘Ye’ll excuse my freedom, sir,’ said Andrew, somewhat rebuked by the air and manner in which his new acquaintance separated from him; ‘but if you are not better engaged, I would be glad if we could breakfast together.’

“‘Can’t, can’t,’ cried the old gentleman, shortly, as he walked away; but turning half-round, after he had walked two or three paces, he added, ‘Obliged to breakfast with the King—he won’t without me;’ and a loud and mirthful laugh gave notice to all the surrounding echoes that a light and pleased spirit claimed their blithest responses.

NORTHCOTE AND REYNOLDS.

Mr. Tom Taylor, in his ‘Life and Times of Sir Joshua Reynolds,’ furnishes us with a curious illustration of Sir Joshua’s estimate of his-

torical painting as compared with portrait painting. Did Sir Joshua really know that he would be regarded in future times as one of the greatest of portrait painters ; but that the historical school, of which he used to be cited as the great example, would have to undergo the severe criticism of a Charles Lamb in his depreciation of Reynolds, as compared with Hogarth? Mr. Taylor begins with the following extract from 'Northcote's Autobiography':—

"In his autobiography Northcote tells us, that happening to sit next to Boydell at a dinner at the house of Nicholls, the King's bookseller, the Lord Mayor—for it was in the year of Boydell's mayoralty—said 'he had often attempted to introduce it to be a fixed custom that every new Lord Mayor should be obliged to order a large historical picture of an appropriate subject from one of the best painters of the time, and a member of the Royal Academy, and then present this picture to the City, either to adorn the Mansion House or else the hall of that particular company to which he might belong ; and then' (said the liberal old Boydell) 'you would be fully employed and the arts advanced in this kingdom.' James (Northcote, throughout his memoirs, speaks of himself in the third person, as James,) praised his noble intentions, and the friendship shown to him in particular, and added that he was very sensible how great a friend he had always shown himself to the arts and artists. 'Yet,' said Boydell, 'when I told this, my intention, to Sir Joshua Reynolds, he did not accord with me, but said it was a foolish thing, aldermen do not understand history painting ;' they can only judge of a likeness ; 'therefore,' said Sir Joshua, 'it should be portraits only for them, and you should begin yourself by giving your own portrait painted by Lawrence, and make an agreement with him to paint them always at the same price he now has, because his terms in future will be much higher.'

"These sentiments were to James a great surprise and morti-

fiction, as it proved Sir Joshua's want of friendship to himself particularly, and that it militated much against the art at large, thus to have history-painting thrown aside for portraits.

"A very few days after this conversation had passed, James met with Mr. Desenfans, who was then speaking of the very high regard which Sir Joshua always expressed to have for James, and that he was his firm friend ; and this opinion being warmly urged, induced James to relate the foregoing conversation, the which Mr. Desenfans a few days afterwards related to Sir Joshua when he met him at a dinner, and induced the following billet, which was brought by Sir Joshua's footman at breakfast time :—

" ' *March 26th, 1791.*

" ' DEAR SIR,—Mr. Desenfans told me yesterday a most extraordinary story, that the Lord Mayor should say to me that he had an intention of introducing whole-length portraits of Lord Mayors into the Mansion House, and that he added he intended to employ Northcote and Opie, and that I advised him not to employ them but Mr. Lawrence.

" ' The reason I mention this to you is in hopes that you will help me in endeavouring to trace this story to its fountain head.

" ' If my opinion is of any value, it is certainly your interest to detect this mischief-maker. I am far from thinking that the Lord Mayor is the author.

" ' I am, &c.,

" ' Yours sincerely,

" ' J. REYNOLDS.' "

"This cavalier note James read with surprise, and gave the servant a verbal answer that he would wait on Sir Joshua immediately. He felt himself in a very great dilemma ; for though he firmly believed that what Boydell had told him was a

truth, yet he knew that Sir Joshua would be mortified to have it publicly known, and might perhaps deny having said it; and on an appeal to Boydell, he feared that he, to pay homage to Sir Joshua as the greatest man, and knowing that it would please, might deny his having said any such thing, and so, according to the old proverb, the weakest must go to the wall. When James resolved within himself, if such was the case, to have taken his oath to the truth of his having heard from Boydell words to that effect, and that he would have insisted on taking his oath to Boydell himself as a magistrate.

“But no such awful encounter was to happen. When James entered Sir Joshua’s breakfast-room he received him with all the mildness possible. When James, impatient to clear himself, related the fact as before seen, Sir Joshua seemed to shrink from it, and could only vindicate himself by asking if it was not very extraordinary that he who had in all his Discourses and writing so much insisted on the dignity of history-painting, should be accused of acting so much the reverse to all he had said. All this James allowed, but still insisted on the truth of his having heard it from Boydell; but Sir Joshua never denied his having said it, or offered to appeal to Boydell for the truth of the matter, and soon dropped it and talked of indifferent things.

“But that which gave James most concern was, as Sir Joshua knew it to be truth, he was not able to forgive himself, and that he would have ill-will against James for knowing it; for, as the old proverb says:—

‘Forgiveness to the injured does belong,

For they ne’er pardon who have done the wrong;’—

and thus ever destroy the pleasure which James always had from the conversation of a man of Sir Joshua’s high abilities, and who, till this moment perhaps, never knew that he had dis-

covered the least fault in his character or conduct, for we always hate those who we think have any reason to despise us."

We subjoin the following passage from Charles Lamb, to which we have referred :—

"It is the fashion with those who cry up the great Historical School in this country, at the head of which Sir Joshua Reynolds is placed, to exclude Hogarth from that School, as an artist of an inferior and vulgar class. Those persons seem to me to confound the painting of subjects in common or vulgar life with the being a vulgar artist. The quantity of thought which Hogarth crowds into every picture, would alone *unvulgarize* every subject which he might choose. Let us take the lowest of his subjects, the print called *Gin Lane*. Here is plenty of poverty and low stuff to disgust upon a superficial view: and accordingly, a cold spectator feels himself immediately disgusted and repelled. I have seen many turn away from it, not being able to bear it. The same persons would perhaps have looked with great complacency upon Poussin's celebrated picture of the *Plague at Athens*. Disease and Death and bewildering Terror, in *Athenian Garments* are endurable, and come, as the delicate critics express it, within the 'limits of pleasurable sensation.' But the scenes of their own St. Giles's, delineated by their own countryman, are too shocking to think of. . . .

"I would ask the most enthusiastic admirer of Reynolds, whether in the countenances of his *Staring* and *Grinning Despair*, which he has given us for the faces of Ugolino and dying Beaufort, there be anything comparable to the expression which Hogarth has put into the face of his broken-down rake in the last plate but one of the *Rake's Progress*, where a letter from the manager is brought to him, to say that his play 'will not do'? Here all is easy, natural, indistorted, but withal, what a mass of

woe is here accumulated!—the long history of a mis-spent life is compressed into the countenance as plainly as the series of plates before had told it; here is no attempt at Gorgonian looks with which to freeze the beholder, no grinning at the antique bed-posts, no face-making, or consciousness of the presence of spectators in or out of the picture; but grief kept to a man's self, a face retiring from notice with the shame which great anguish sometimes brings with it—a final leave taken of hope—the coming on of vacancy and stupefaction—a beginning alienation of mind looking like tranquillity.

THE END.

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